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Nov. 12, 2014

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Best wishes in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

Anna Groff

Interim Editor
The Mennonite

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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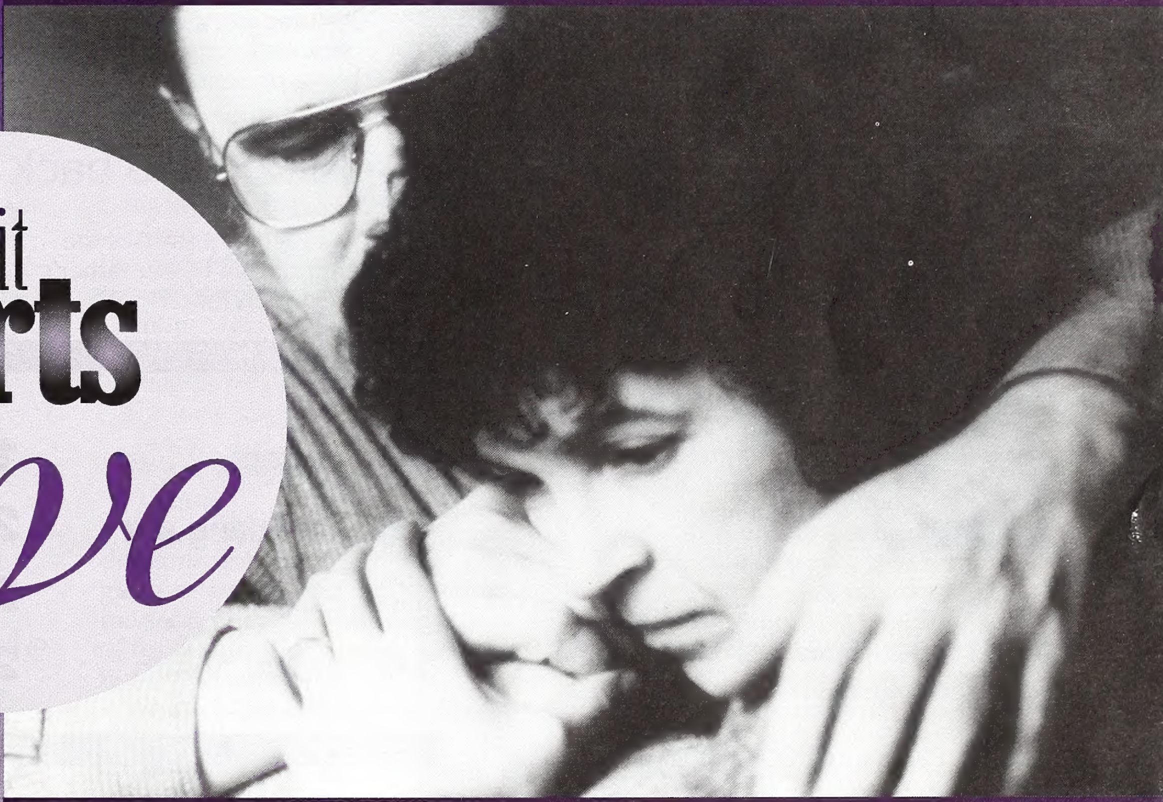
When it hurts to live



- We are not made of china (see page 5)
- Love continues to speak (see page 6)
- To hell and back (see page 8)

Prologue

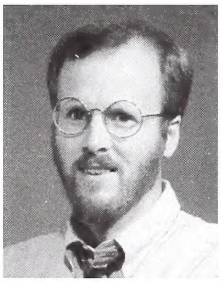
Jesus said, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). His invitation still applies to any of us who are carrying burdens. It is also a call to us to bear one another's burdens.

Kathleen Kern (see page 3) shares some of her experience with depression and tells how we may be helpful to others who are battling this overwhelming—and widespread—disease. Her book *When It Hurts to Live* is due out in a couple of months from Faith & Life Press. If you want to place an advance order, call toll free 1-800-743-2484.

Christine Wiebe (page 6) offers insights from her experience with mental health patients about the importance of simply being present with people who are hurting. Often, she says, a person's depression derives from some trauma the person has not been able to talk about.

Another writer tells the harrowing story of her father's schizophrenia (page 8).

In our Speaking Out feature (page 12), Merlin Friesen reflects on the pervasive racism in our society. Mathew Swora continues his Bible study of Revelation 12 (page 13), and J.B. Miller offers tips for anyone wanting to invest in the international market (page 14).



May your new year be one of joy, and may we all help bear one another's burdens. *gh*

Next issue: Stories of refugees in the former Yugoslavia

Cover: Photo by CLEO Photography

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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When it hurts to live

God can work through our depression to help us grow.

Kathleen Kern

The pastor of the church I attended as a child had a habit of running overtime while preaching. He typically made up the time by cutting short the hymn that followed the sermon each Sunday.

One Sunday during Advent the final hymn was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day." As was his custom, the pastor instructed the congregation to sing the first three verses only. Coming to the third verse, we sang,

"Then in despair I bowed my head.
There is no peace on earth, I said.
For hate is strong and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, goodwill to men.
Amen."

This memory encapsulates the dilemma facing Christians who struggle with depression. The amen cuts in too soon, keeping us from the promise of resolution and hope for what seems like a long time.

We are faced with a continuing dreary reality, a persistent sadness, a dread of existence itself that even the grace of God cannot seem to penetrate.

Other Christians and our loved ones try to help. They recommend psalms that have helped them when they have felt a little blue. They remind us that we serve the risen Lord who told us not to be anxious. They tell us to praise God for our many blessings, for in doing so we will not focus so much on the negative aspects of our lives.

And we feel even worse. We do serve a risen Lord. We love God, who has showered us richly with blessings. We *have no right* to feel as despondent as we do. And yet we do feel sad, discouraged and afraid. We berate ourselves for not having the faith that our lives will get better or that we will find meaning in them.

Emotional trauma: Depression is a medical condition caused by chemical imbalances in the brain that affect people's emotions, energy levels, sleep patterns and ability to concentrate. These imbalances can result from one's genetic makeup and from physical and emotional trauma. Certain types of medication can correct these imbalances and enable people to resume their normal level of functioning.

Depression is also a psychological condition. Psychologists commonly refer to it as anger turned inward. Depression can result when people have not adequately dealt with issues from their past or have not successfully or honestly dealt with current stresses in their lives. Psychotherapy can help people analyze why they feel the way they do and offer guidance as people make the difficult decision to change.

Depression is also a spiritual condition. It is a feeling that God has deserted us, or that God for some reason chooses not to help us. It is a feeling of deep loneliness, a separation from the rest of humanity. It is a feeling of guilt that our faith is not strong enough to believe that we will

Heckman Binding

My own struggles with depression have taught me that it heals neither quickly nor easily and that the medical, psychological and spiritual aspects of the disease all need treatment.

be healed. It is guilt over our self-absorption, and guilt that our faith in Christ does not seem to be enough to make us happy. Pastoral counseling and the church community can offer support when people feel this way. Depressed members of the church can lean on the faith of others.

As more Christians enter the fields of psychiatry and psychotherapy, depression can be treated in a more holistic manner than in the past. There are many Christian counselors and psychiatrists who address the medical, psychological and spiritual aspects of the condition when people come to them for help.

However, a split still seems to exist between the secular world and the church community when discussing treatment of depression.

Secular counselors and psychiatrists, most of them loving and supportive people, cannot always address the spiritual aspect of depression. They can help Christians sort through issues and emotions that keep them from functioning as full human beings. But they may be unsure how they can help someone struggling with feelings of desertion by God. In a worst-case scenario, they may dismiss someone's spirituality as part of his or her neurosis and lead him or her to an even more vast spiritual desert.

Pastors and other concerned Christians can sympathize with someone who experiences feelings of spiritual desolation. They can pray for healing and offer guidance from their experience and from their knowledge of Scripture. However, they may fail to acknowledge the medical and psychological aspects of depression. In a worst-case scenario, they may tell someone afflicted with depression that if they will just get right with God, they will not need antidepressant medication or psychotherapy. Thus, they place guilt as an additional burden on the already struggling believer.

My own struggles with depression have taught me that it heals neither quickly nor easily and that the medical, psychological and spiritual aspects of the disease all need treatment.

Praying to die: I have had three major episodes of depression. I sought and received help for the second and third episodes. I did not call the first episode by that name until later. I was depressed from at least age 12 until I went off to college. I remember as a 13-year-old fervently praying to die. The request became a routine part of my prayers, along with requests to have no nightmares and to pass tests. When I went to college, I experienced a spiritual awakening. For the first time in my life I felt the presence of God as a living reality.

I knew the reality of happiness and realized how unhappy I had been. I learned that the depression I had felt for nearly half my life was not the real me. It was not what God wanted or expected of me.

My second bout with depression occurred as a result of a trauma in my life when I was 25. I ended up on a psychiatric ward for one week.

I hated every moment I was there. I didn't belong there, I told myself. I wasn't crazy. However, since the doctors would not let me go home, I made friends with two people on the ward, Scott and Avery (not their real names), who had also suffered traumas. Scott was a construction worker and ex-Marine whose wife had left, taking his kids with her. Avery was a convicted felon who hadn't been able to pull his life together after his family moved off a Native American reservation in upstate New York.

Avery had tried to commit suicide in prison three times. The authorities had stopped giving him silverware at meals, but he had discovered that he could unwind the metal tip of his shoelace and sharpen it on the concrete floor until it was sharp enough to slice through his wrist. Since Avery was still under custody during his weeks on the ward, a prison guard stayed with him at all times, silently following him from room to room.

Avery, Scott and I talked for hours. We learned to ignore the guard. I would have felt nothing in common with them in the outside world. Yet we became a community on the ward, bound together by our common suffering. As the two of them chain-smoked, something I would not have tolerated before, we shared the hurts of our past and present more intimately than I have shared with most people in my church.

My time on the psych ward taught me that I never wanted to go back there. It taught me to become less judgmental of people who were from different backgrounds. It taught me what it feels like to be treated like a child. And the psych ward experience served as a springboard for long-term therapy with a sequence of Christian counselors.

Since that time I have done some counseling myself and realize now that I was the sort of client most therapists enjoy treating. I wanted to come to terms with the aspects of my past and present that fostered my depression, and I conscientiously followed my counselor's advice. Gradually my appointments became fewer and farther between. Finally, the counselor I was seeing at the time and I agreed that I had completed therapy.

My third experience with depression began a couple of years ago. I had become discouraged by political maneuverings at the agency where I worked. My dissatisfaction with work made me look to the future. I realized that I did not know what direction my life should take and felt despair at the transience and lack of roots in my life.

This bout of depression came as a shock. I had learned to count my blessings and put my suffering in perspective. I had learned how to build my self-esteem. Why, I wondered, was I feeling all I had felt before? How could self-loathing become so easily and deeply rerooted?

I felt I had failed. Going on antidepressant medication again made me wonder if I had been healed the first time. I wondered if the rest of my life would be characterized by periods of depression. Will I have to deal with the same old thing over and over?

I probably will. And each time I do I will be a little stronger, a little more able to bear it. Each time, I will bring to new episodes of depression insights I gained during the last episode.

God works through our depression to help us grow. As a result of my experiences with it I have become less judgmental, less self-righteous and more able to empathize with others in their emotional and spiritual struggles. Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness before he began his ministry. I believe that the time we spend in our own spiritual wilderness prepares us to be better servants of God's kingdom.

Reprinted with permission from When It Hurts to Live: Devotions for Difficult Times *by Kathleen Kern (forthcoming from Faith & Life Press).*

Kathleen Kern wrote her book of devotions to address the reality of depression in the Christian life and to provide at least a small comfort to those afflicted by it. She does not intend the book as a substitute for counseling or the support of a church community. She writes from the perspective of a biblical scholar, not of a psychotherapist.

We are not made of china

Kathleen Kern

Read Job 6:8-13

In Job 3, Job expresses three wishes: (1) that he had never been born, (2) that he had died at birth, (3) that his life might end now. In chapters 4 and 5 his friend Eliphaz endeavors to make some response, countering the cries of anguish with logical discourse. Eliphaz's words offer no comfort to Job, of course, and Job replies bitterly in 6:1-7. His prosperous friend has not the barest idea of Job's suffering. If it were possible to weigh the calamity that has fallen on Job, it would weigh more than "all the sand of the sea." Can't Eliphaz see that it is God who caused Job's tragedy? Job claims that he has been poisoned by "the arrows of the Almighty."

In Job 6:8-13, Job returns to the theme begun in chapter 3. He wants his misery to end. His belief that God has authored his misery makes him wish to no longer have a relationship with God. If God will only cut Job off, as a tyrannical parent might disinherit a child, then Job will feel free to blaspheme. He can tell God exactly what he thinks of this Creator.

As it is, he no longer feels strong enough to bear the crushing weight of his misfortune. Because he chooses to remain faithful to God, he must bear the misery that God sends him. Job is made of mortal flesh. He feels pain. He wonders, "Does God think that I am made of stone or metal? Why does God continue to heap pain upon overwhelming pain on me?"

Job concludes by saying that he has nothing left within himself that will enable him to go on. Eliphaz's sermon has driven away any last remnants of his fortitude.

Application: A friend of mine was in therapy because her husband had fallen in love with another woman. At one point, in despair, she told her counselor that she could not go on anymore. The situation was too much for her to handle. Her counselor informed her, "You're not a china doll, you know."

Sometimes we feel more fragile than a china doll. Our hearts are already brittle from having been broken daily. We simply cannot face one more hardship, one more jolt of pain.

Yet the hardships keep coming, and we go on. Like Job we cry out that we are only made of flesh and blood. We are not stone. How can God continue to allow the pain to grind into us?

Also, like Job, we are denied a quick end to our sufferings. As followers of God, we do not have the option of suicide. The God who allows our suffering to hold us will not grant us the right to escape this suffering.

We need to remember that we are not made of china. We are all stronger than we think we are. Job was stronger than he thought he was, for he did survive—not only his calamities but also his angry confrontations with God.

Things to think about: What were some times in your life when you felt you could not handle one more calamity? What happened? Did you handle it or were you able to escape?

Have you ever felt that God was responsible for your misery? How did this affect your prayer life?

Do you have an answer to the question of why God allows bad things to happen to people?

Have you ever considered suicide as an option? If yes, do you still consider it an option? How do your responsibilities to God and to other people affect your decisions in this area?

Prayer: God, I do not always feel strong enough to handle the stresses in my life. Fill me with the knowledge of your strength when I do not feel strong enough to go on. Amen.

Reprinted with permission from When It Hurts to Live: Devotions for Difficult Times *by Kathleen Kern (forthcoming from Faith & Life Press).*

A nurse working with mentally-ill patients learns the importance of being present.

Love continues to speak

Christine R. Wiebe

I had not been a nurse long when I was assigned Mrs. Grant,* a 75-year-old woman admitted to our in-patient geriatric psychiatry unit. She had threatened visitors to her apartment with a knife, and also kept her neighbors awake at night with wild shouts and pounding on the walls. The psychiatrist had written "major depression with psychotic features" in the admitting notes.

Mrs. Grant was angry about being admitted to a psychiatric unit. She believed space beings were attacking her through the walls with laser beams, and that her family was involved in the plot against her.

"They want to say I'm crazy so they can put me away," she muttered. She sat in the telephone seat in the long hospital hallway and seethed, talking to herself and barking at passersby.

I was wary about approaching her, but she needed to calm down, both for her own well-being and that of the patients, who were afraid to pass her. I introduced myself.

"I will be the nurse to care for you while you are in the hospital," I said. "I'm sorry you're here." I asked her what had brought her to the hospital.

She appeared relieved to have someone who would listen, and she told me all about her family's plot against her, which had fooled the doctors.

"There's nothing wrong with me," she insisted. "They just want to put me here so they can have my money."

She talked a long time, and I assured her she was in a safe place. We wanted to care for her. She still clung to her delusion, but eventually calmed down enough to go to her room and take off her coat. I showed her where to find towels and soap and explained that on this unit patients got their own supplies and did their own laundry and light cleaning.

When I arrived at work the next morning, she was still waiting vigilantly in the hallway, muttering to herself. I sat down by her and asked how she was doing. She retold me of the plot against her and wondered if laser beams could penetrate hospital walls. I assured her again she was in a safe place. I was not sure what to say next.

"It must be hard," I said, "to face all this."

"Yes," she said, "it's been so hard since my husband died." She cried and told me the first "real" story since I had worked with her. Her husband had become ill with cancer nine months before and had died six months later. To acknowledge her loss and begin to grieve for her husband was a major and necessary step for her before she could go on to health.

Later, in supervision with the nurse manager, I realized what Mrs. Grant and I had done together. We had discovered the hidden feelings beneath her anger. Although she held onto her paranoia—in a sense her world with husband gone was not trustworthy—she began the process of dealing with his death. She calmed down, joined unit activities and slowly began to grieve and accept her loss. The fear of people plotting against her and attacking her did not go away, but it decreased and became less important.

Dark treasure: I found that lesson of the hidden feelings to be valuable with many clients. Frequently the depression, lack of expression, obsession, psychosis or mania was a way to deal with hidden feelings. It did not always make sense to unseal these feelings; sometimes it was better to affirm the defenses. But it was always good to recognize that the aberrant behavior was sometimes a clue to something hidden away. Some clients needed to protect that dark treasure to go on with life. Others had enough internal and family supports to pull it out into the light and deal with its pain.

It became clear to me that the presence of supports, of people who were concerned and present, was crucial to the healing process of the mentally ill. Several people come to mind who illustrated this for me.

The first was Martha, a 72-year-old, never-married woman who had been depressed much of her life. She had spent her early years in an orphanage, where she was seldom held and likely abused. Martha returned to our unit many times, sometimes profoundly depressed, not eating or responding; other times angry and psychotic, believing Satan had possessed her. It was not wise to explore the pain of her childhood or early life with her, for she did not have the inner or outer resources to deal with it, so stirring up those sad memories only increased her fragmented state.

I sometimes asked myself, "What are we doing for this woman?" We gave her medication, shock treatments, occupational and individual therapy. We saw her through multiple medical crises; she had cardiac failures, pneumonia and more. "Why readmit her?" I asked myself, when she returned the fourth and fifth time.

**Names have been changed to protect privacy.*

It became clear to me that the presence of supports, of people who were concerned and present, was crucial to the healing process of the mentally ill.

I began to sense that she came to the hospital not to be cured of her many ailments but to be among people who were present to her. The treatments were a safe way for her to be close to someone. We had many team meetings about Martha, and eventually it became clear to us that we—the system—were her family. The hospital was the "mother" she had never had. Martha did not get better. She was unable to move beyond a chronic depression, but she was able to survive, with frequent times of "touching base" with us.

Mrs. Hubbard also came to our unit depressed, although she did not appear on the surface to be sad. She was carefully dressed, she smiled and denied that anything was wrong. However, she had lost 20 pounds over the last few months. She had stopped going to church or social outings, although she had been an active church member with many friends in the small rural community where she had lived for 20 years.

Retreat from life: Mrs. Hubbard's large and supportive family revealed that her retreat from life and meaningful activity had occurred after her oldest daughter had announced she was a lesbian and had entered a lifetime partnership with her roommate.

Mrs. Hubbard did not talk about her daughter at first, but in the safety of the hospital the pain of this news slowly came out. It felt impossible to talk about her lesbian daughter in the small, highly-churched community where she lived. But with the help of a social worker and psychiatrist, she was able to talk about her daughter with her family, who shared her confusion and pain.

She was able to make an inner space for her feelings to be expressed, and that space was carefully held together by a loving network of husband and children. The issue continued to trouble her, but she was able to name it, and move on to the daily struggle of dealing with it.

Recently a friend of mine revealed that a family member had been placed in a psychiatric unit. "We're not sure whether to call or visit her," she said. "We're afraid we'll make her worse."

This fear of saying or doing the wrong thing is common. As a novice psychiatric nurse I worried about this, too, and one day had the courage to ask a senior psychiatrist about it in a staff meeting.

"What if I say the wrong thing?" I asked. "What if I trigger a psychotic reaction with the wrong word?"

"If you have a sense that what you want to say will be helpful, go ahead and take the risk," she said. "If it's not the right thing, it will be grist for the mill." In other words, I will have learned how to be more helpful with that client.

Another friend told me that during her own period of psychosis, many friends and relatives came to see her. "I don't remember what they said," she said. "I just know that they cared about me. It felt like they were literally pulling me out of my depression and fear."

Sometimes it is helpful not to speak or see a client, and psychiatric staff will restrict visitors if this is so. Some clients have so much internal stimulation that they cannot deal with much external stimulation. But for most people struggling with mental illness, any honest expression of caring from family and friends is helpful. Amid confusion, fear and uncertainty, love can continue to speak.

Christine R. Wiebe has worked as a parish nurse in Chicago and directed a free nurses' clinic for homeless and low-income people in Wichita, Kan., where she lives. Because of health problems she is unable to work at present.

She had decided not to stay

Janice Waltner Sevilla

She had decided not
to stay and so she kept
her suitcase packed and ready
on the extra chair.

Her purse, containing all
her private life, stood
waiting on the bed.
She took it with her

everywhere she went (because
she was just visiting
and would go home tomorrow …
or next week). She didn't

hang her coat up so it
would be near at hand
and ready to go
when the time came.

Days passed, and temporary
began to feel the same as
permanent. She must
tidy the room a bit.

For the housekeepers
she moved her purse to a drawer.
When visitors arrived,
she put her coat on a

hanger. And just last week
she emptied her suitcase
and hung her fading
memories in the closet.

Janice Waltner Sevilla lives in Goessel, Kan.

To hell and back

Anonymous

Panic struck my heart as I listened to the voices coming from our living room. It wouldn't be long now until violence reached its peak. Ear to the door, I heard objects smash to the ground, signaling to our neighbors a woman's heart that was broken, battered and emotionally abused. This woman was my mother.

Incessant anger and inner conviction drove the man to batter her with his words: "You are just like everyone else. They are always watching. You thought you had me cornered, but I'm not a Nazi like you." This man was my father.

Both individuals were undergoing extreme suffering that at times tasted like death itself. To a sleeping world and its statistics this was just another fight; to the police this was just another domestic dispute; but to me this was a crisis that shook the very fiber of my being because the people involved were my mom and dad.

Life had not always been so complicated. There were days when a joke could be told without the fear of it becoming an issue. But the jokes soon stopped, and every word had to be weighed carefully. Visitors were screened, and we became prisoners inside our own home. Although life marched on relentlessly, for us time stood still. Chaos ruled, and peace came only when everyone was mercifully asleep.

What had happened? An unseen enemy named schizophrenia entered my father's life, and torment became his constant companion.

Paranoia and delusions filtered his every waking moment. A bus could pass by and my father would become agitated. Why? "Well, didn't you read that message on the side of the bus? They know I'm here!" Not at all aware of this disease, we all assumed that we were the problem. And we couldn't fix this vague fault within ourselves, so Mom became an alcoholic, and I became anorexic.

In the midst of this blackness, I found a measure of security in knowing Jesus was in control, especially when it seemed that no one else was.

As the years passed, Mom was struck with cancer, but she died in peace, having become a Christian weeks before. She died never knowing that Dad had schizophrenia.

Calamity seemed to follow shortly after her death, as our family business closed down and major changes had to be made. All that now remained was a broken, confused and unemployed widower. With no job to go to and only his thoughts to listen to, he brooded and thought, constantly looking out his window. Days gave way to weeks, and weeks gave way to months.

Then one day we came to the startling realization that something was very wrong. This wasn't just Dad and his idiosyncrasies anymore. Shouts in different tones of voice echoed throughout the house. Sleepless nights and inactive days drove Dad deeper into the abyss of his mind. Within a short time we were all seen as the enemy trying to infiltrate the ranks.

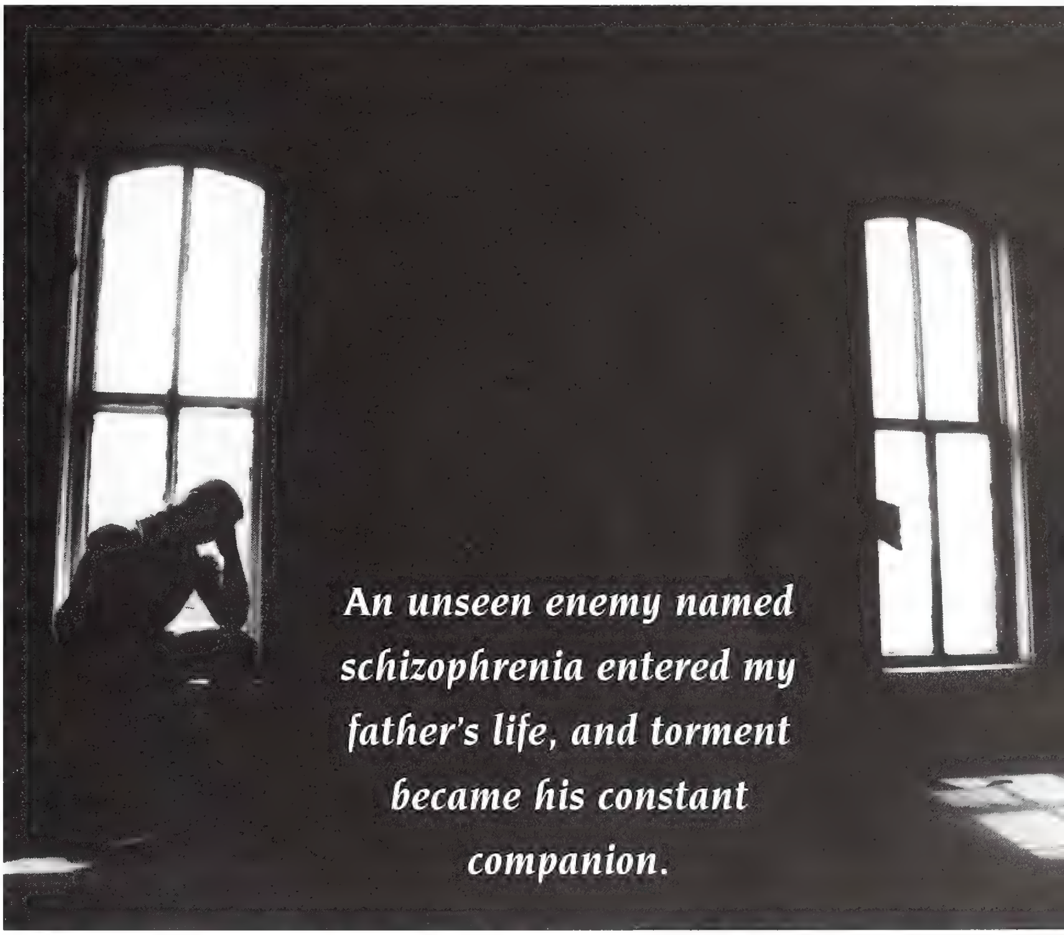
In much prayer we mentioned this behavioral problem to our doctor. A home visit was promptly conducted in a casual manner. The diagnosis rang true and clear: My dad had schizophrenia. The mental health unit was called on to confirm the diagnosis. The next day a team came for a home visit. Anxiety and panic gripped me. Feelings of betrayal overwhelmed me. What was I doing to my dad?

After quickly introducing the team to my dad, I nervously and prayerfully left. A short while later the team came over to tell us of my father's definite problem. There were a couple of suggestions as to the next course of action: (1) he could come down voluntarily and sign himself into a psychiatric ward for care, (2) he could come to the clinic and meet with the doctor to receive proper counsel and medication, or (3) he could have a prescription filled.

Extreme paranoia: All three alternatives were difficult at best to follow through on because of my father's extreme paranoia. Pills were merely a device used by the enemy to frame him. Besides, as far as he was concerned, nothing was wrong with him. Due to the legalities involved in his basic constitutional rights, Dad could not be forcibly committed to a hospital unless he was a danger to himself or to others. He was considered neither. His home was orderly and no one had been physically abused. Tears of frustration burned down my cheeks as I watched my father return to his chair to sit and watch out the window.

As time progressed my father's condition deteriorated. He was becoming a physical threat to himself and even-

A daughter's story of the pain caused by her father's schizophrenia



An unseen enemy named schizophrenia entered my father's life, and torment became his constant companion.

Vada Snider (for illustration only)

tually was given an ultimatum. He was to come in for an appointment to see a doctor or he would be forcibly committed. He claimed to have understood the arrangement. The day of his appointment came and went. The following day we were informed that an ambulance and back-up unit were on their way to pick up Dad. Within minutes the team arrived, knocked on Dad's door and entered. Twenty minutes later Dad left with the persua-sion of a police officer. Dad's com-ment was, "I suppose I'll have the right to speak to the embassy about this."

I have no words to express my sorrow as I watched the ambulance pull away. I knew Dad felt he was being led away as a political prisoner.

After two days passed I could visit him. Nurses in street clothes greeted me. Brightly painted walls and plants gave the entire ward sparkle and life. As I approached my dad's room, I was sure my heartbeat would announce my arrival. There was a humbled, broken man. My dad. A grin broke out on his face, the first grin I had seen in a lifetime.

Dad's time in the hospital had some trials. Some days Dad's paranoia surfaced to frightening proportions. But this was progress. His defense was being let down, enabling an accurate diagnosis to be made.

Upon his release, apprehension seized us. Would he be faithful to take his medication? He was not.

When newspapers began to collect on his doorstep, we suspected something was wrong. He was not in his apartment. That night he did not return. Nor the night after that. We filled out our report to an investigator of missing persons. We phoned morgues and hospitals. No one had seen Dad. Tears brought me to my Savior; he assured me again that he was in control. Dad showed up five days later, unresponsive and obviously off his medication. This led us to the solution.

We were able to have Dad's medication injected into his system once a month. It has been two years now since Dad had a relapse into his delusional paranoias. Life is sweet for him now. Laughter has replaced bitterness, peace has replaced anguish. He can read without hidden messages infiltrating his every thought. Side effects haven't affected the quality of life.

Dad's schizophrenia took a toll on my family. Our brothers and sisters in Christ stood with us. They made Jesus real to us and to Dad with their phone calls of encouragement, midnight prayers, fasting, meals they cooked for us, the hospitality extended to us when we feared to stay in our own home, hugs, financial support and the hospital visits.

Schizophrenia can be frightening. It can destroy homes and leave one feeling helpless and guilt-ridden. Shame and despair become constant companions. But individuals with schizophrenia can be helped, just as Dad was.

Letters

MOURNING MARLIN

The sudden death of Marlin Miller, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, on Nov. 3 left his family, friends in the church, and the seminary community reeling. We feel sharply the loss of the quality of Marlin's vision and leadership, his Christian integrity, his theological clarity, his friendship and humor.

On behalf of the seminary community, I want to express our gratefulness to God for the outpouring of prayer and expressions of shared grief and care from members of our own supporting denominations. These are truly a testimony to Marlin's Christian witness and an encouragement to our ongoing teaching ministry.

We ask the church to remember us and hold us in prayer as we face the task of reorienting many aspects of our work together in the months ahead. *Gayle Gerber Koontz, Dean and Acting President, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.*

NATIVES AGAINST GAMBLING

I read with keen interest the recent issue focused on "The Gambling Mania" (Nov. 22). Over 20 years ago I participated in a well-managed and successful effort to educate Native American tribes on their sovereign status. I co-trained with Native American attorneys under the auspices of the Institute for the Development of Indian Law, which was then of Washington, D.C. Many Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) voluntary service workers were involved as support staff. They aided in research, writing and development of curricula. Little did I know that our successful educational efforts with tribal leaders would bring about bingo halls and gambling casinos as one expression of sovereignty! I see a devastating effect on families when there is addiction to gaming. The article titled "The Longest Quarter Mile in Mississippi" (page 6) by Larry Penner was well done and prompts this letter.

Gaming does not have full support in many Native American communities. Mennonite media need to call attention to groups of Native Americans opposed to gaming, for such groups often need the church's help. A case in point is a group of Mohawks who find gaming diametrically opposed to their traditional values. This particular subgroup of traditionalists has purchased land in the Mohawk Valley of New York. A few years ago they sought assistance from churches, including MCC, to purchase land, but were unsuccessful. They obtained acreage by other means but still need aid, especially to build a separate self-supporting community where detrimental influences such as gaming will be prohibited. MCC U.S. has recently donated a tractor to them, and I applaud this action. I may soon be privileged to visit this group of Mohawks. I find kindred views on gaming with them. There are Native Americans who are unequivocally opposed to gaming, including yours truly. *Lawrence H. Hart, member-at-large of MCC U.S., Clinton, Okla.*

Inside
Mennonite
The gambling mania

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

I would like to thank David Ortman and *The Mennonite* on behalf of Global Response Environmental Action Network (GR) for mentioning our international environmental action network in the Oct. 11 article, "The Earth Needs Friends in the Church." I am a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker in Boulder, Colo., where GR is based, and began working here in September 1994. I couldn't have been more surprised—and pleased—than to see our network mentioned in a Mennonite publication.

GR is a mild form of action that citizens can take to hold accountable those who make environmental mistakes and endanger not just the Earth's future but the people who live where those mistakes are made. Our letter writers have made a difference for South Africans, Bermudans and Bangladeshis who live near toxic waste dumps or have toxic waste mixed with the fertilizer they buy. They have written letters encouraging protection of flamingo feeding groups in Venezuela and rain forests in Malaysia, Guyana and Burma. They write to protect the mighty Siberian tiger and the boreal forests of Russia. GR combines human rights and justice concerns with the need to carefully use and tend the Earth and its fruits.

The monthly action GR newsletters are written for adults, youth and children. Youth and teachers can order a guide to help organize classroom activities and after-school clubs. For more information, write to Global Response EAN, P.O. Box 7490, Boulder, CO 80306-7490; or call (303) 444-0306. *Joanne (Jake) Kaufman, Boulder, Colo.*

A CHURCH MEMBER IN PRISON

I'm currently incarcerated at the Ohio Reformatory for Women. I recently joined the Mennonite church on July 17, here at the prison. It was the first time in the history of the institution that an outside church was allowed to come in and receive one of the inmates into its congregation. Some of the members of the church, my prison Prayer and Share Group, my mother and our two chaplains were there, and it was a delightful service.

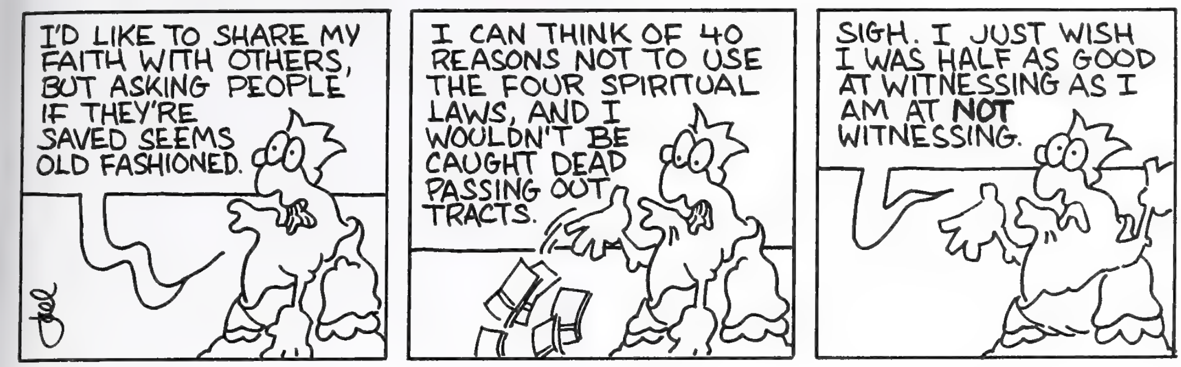
The reason I'm writing you is to see if you would be able to send me a subscription to *The Mennonite* free of charge since I'm incarcerated. I saw an ad for this magazine and thought that maybe it would help give me a little more insight and knowledge into the Mennonite community, since

Ideas your church can try

Seattle Mennonite Church hosts a video series on Friday nights. The church provides popcorn or people may bring their own snacks. This past fall they showed *Godspell* and *Schindler's List*, then invited other suggestions.

On a Sunday night the church hosted "almost church," a time and place to explore alternative worship styles, a chance to experiment and share what is meaningful to people.

Pontius' Puddle


I'D LIKE TO SHARE MY FAITH WITH OTHERS, BUT ASKING PEOPLE IF THEY'RE SAVED SEEMS OLD FASHIONED.
I CAN THINK OF 40 REASONS NOT TO USE THE FOUR SPIRITUAL LAWS, AND I WOULDN'T BE CAUGHT DEAD PASSING OUT TRACTS.
SIGH. I JUST WISH I WAS HALF AS GOOD AT WITNESSING AS I AM AT NOT WITNESSING.

I just joined the church.

May God continue to bless you and keep you as you share the Good News of his holy Word with others. *Chrystal Reichenbach, Marysville, Ohio*

Editor's note: *We have begun a subscription for Chrystal out of our subscription fund for prisoners. However, the fund needs replenishing. Anyone wishing to contribute to it may send a check to Prisoner Subscription Fund,* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

TRIBUTE TO GAN SAKIBARA

During our 17 years in Japan under the Commission on Overseas Mission, my husband, Carl, and I became well acquainted with Dr. and Mrs. Gan Sakibara. In fact, I was his volunteer secretary during our years north of Tokyo, and I took several trains each week to get to their fourth-floor apartment home near Shibuya Station. There was no elevator, yet I had trouble keeping up with the Sakibaras up those four flights of stairs.

They always served tea and sweetcakes around their low table, around which we knelt on the floor. There we spent many hours together discussing intentional communities around the world. I called the Sakibaras "Mom" and "Dad," and they called me their daughter. I helped edit many of Gan Sensei's manuscripts, which he had either written in English or translated from Japanese. His pilgrimage from Buddhism to Presbyterianism, and later to the Anabaptists through his fascination with the economics of intentional communities of faith, was a great inspiration and marvel to me.

Gan Sensei died at his daughter Ritz's home in Corvallis, Ore., on Nov. 30, 1994. His children have requested that his cremains be buried in a Mennonite cemetery in Japan. What a great privilege it was to have spent the quality years we had with him in Tokyo! I am happy to see his dream of establishing a library for his great collection of Anabaptist historical and theological books realized—next door to the Honan Cho Church—and I helped catalogue them. I am glad to have handled the rare books and manuscripts and to have witnessed the dignity and grace both Chie and Gan carried with them as they aged and faded from our generation. I loved them. *Sandra Liechty, Lima, Ohio*

CHURCH AND POLITICS

Donald Fry wrote a timely Speaking Out article urging respect and civility toward government officials (Oct. 25 issue, page 10). It is important that we voice our opinions of politicians (or anybody else) in a calm and intelligent manner.

However, I was surprised that Mr. Fry, who is pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, wrote that he is a "card-carrying Republican." A church that involves itself with politics is seen as a lobbying organization in the eyes of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. Such pronouncements could lead to his church's tax exemption being revoked.

I am also surprised that a pastor would join a political party and advertise it. I vote for whom I think is the best candidate but refuse to associate myself with political platforms and ideologies. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

WHERE TO FIND LIST OF ACTIVITIES

A belated thank you for the excellent Oct. 11, 1994, issue on "Learning to Respect the Earth." On page 5 the suggestion was made to paraphrase Ten Commandments or Beatitudes for Recyclers from my book *What on Earth Can You Do?* Those items are not in chapter seven as stated. The Ten Commandments are on pages 46 and 47 and Beatitudes for Recyclers are on pages 83 and 84 in chapter six. The list of activities was prepared before the book was off the press, and locations were changed in the editorial process. *Donna Lehman, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

From our mission workers

Burkina Faso—We continue with corrections of Old Testament Bible stories in Samogho. We work with three men, each representing a different age group. They enjoy study and willingly give suggestions. Others stop by and listen to the cassettes as we work. It is obvious that the stories need no explanation and have integrity all their own. Last evening a young man shared his excitement about the Dioula version of Abraham that he had just read. He started out by saying, "Your holy book is really great!" Then he went on to share high points in Abraham's life, especially the many times he simply depended on God. *Loren and Donna Entz*

Nanchong, China—The church we attend is situated in a courtyard, and as you turn the corner just before the church you can hear people practicing hymns. This is because a great many people are sitting outside, since there isn't enough room in the church. One morning's sermon was on God's peace, and it was delivered by a recent graduate of the seminary in nearby Chengdu. The senior pastor, as well as the chair of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, we were told, had both been sent off to "re-education through labor" during the years of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The sermon lasted about an hour. *Jeanette and Todd Hanson*

Racism is alive and well

We need to repent of our racist assumptions.

Merlin Friesen

While traveling home through the South Dakota Badlands one day in mid-November 1994, I passed the miles listening to public radio and thinking about the sad ending to the story in Union, S.C. Along with media people, I found myself horrified over the murder of two little children by their mother, an event repeated daily in our country.

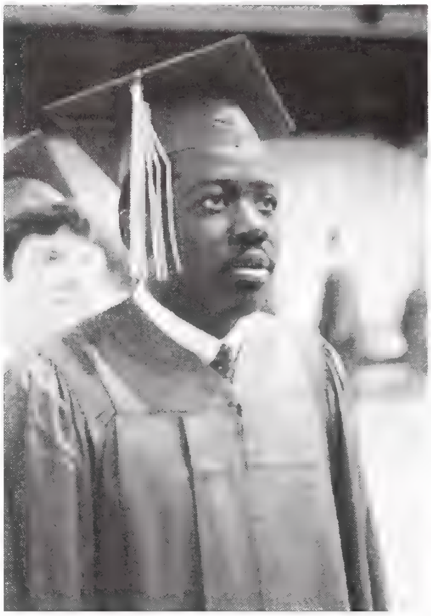
I listened as our media proxies explained away their gullible response to Ms. Smith's tearful but fabricated story of her children's abduction. They unabashedly admitted that her story was all the more believable and riveting because it included a black male as the purported abductor. This despite the acknowledged fact that nearly two-thirds of child murders are committed by the parents.

However, my sadness moved to a more troubling issue as I listened to the news analysts attempting to scrape away the mud from their collective faces. What concerned me more was the way we as a white majority in the United States continue to stereotype young African-American men. Amid all the pious hand-wringing over the death of two white children, and despite the obvious racist overtones in Ms. Smith's headline-grabbing story, there was no repentance, and little acknowledgment of the part we (whites) all share in the collective fear and suspicion we direct toward this whole group of our fellow humans. After all, the line went, there really is a fear of black men, deep-rooted in our national psyche. As I listened, it was as though this racist pattern of thinking was common and understandable, therefore excusable, and by extension perhaps justifiable, respectable.

“Speaking out” and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

My thoughts moved homeward to my own acquaintances, among the Lakota heirs of our nation's legacy of racism toward Native people. I thought of a friend's recent gentle description of the prejudice she had experienced just a few days earlier when a middle-aged white woman at a store in a nearby city refused to let her delightful preschool daughter use the rest room. I thought of the callous approach of a lecturer a few days ago at a conference, characterizing Lakota spirituality as “superstitious.”

'Tomahawk chop': In the last year I have learned to grieve at our nation's callous indifference to the personal distress and denigration produced by media images of buck-toothed cartoon Indians doing the “tomahawk chop” (despite courteous and articulate attempts by Native people to raise our sensitivity). In these and even more concrete ways, we see our fellow humans treated as objects of curiosity, living anachronisms whose culture and religion is all too readily dismissed as a colorful form of barbarism. Here among my Lakota friends I see the results of a long and brutal history of cultural destruction. I hear the personal stories of violence, distrust and discrimination related by our acquaintances in this community. We continue to see evidence of insensitivity and opportunism in white dealings with Native people. Those Lakota who speak out are characterized as troublemakers.


Dale Gehman

We as a white majority in the United States continue to stereotype young African-American men.

Though I live among people who have felt the heavy burden of oppression, I know that no one group has a monopoly on this experience. I have seen disenchantment, distrust and resentment in some of the young Lakota men I have come to know. However, we in North America are also regularly told of the anger and bitterness that smolders in so many young African-American men as they are subjected to knee-jerk fear and discrimination in our white-dominated culture.

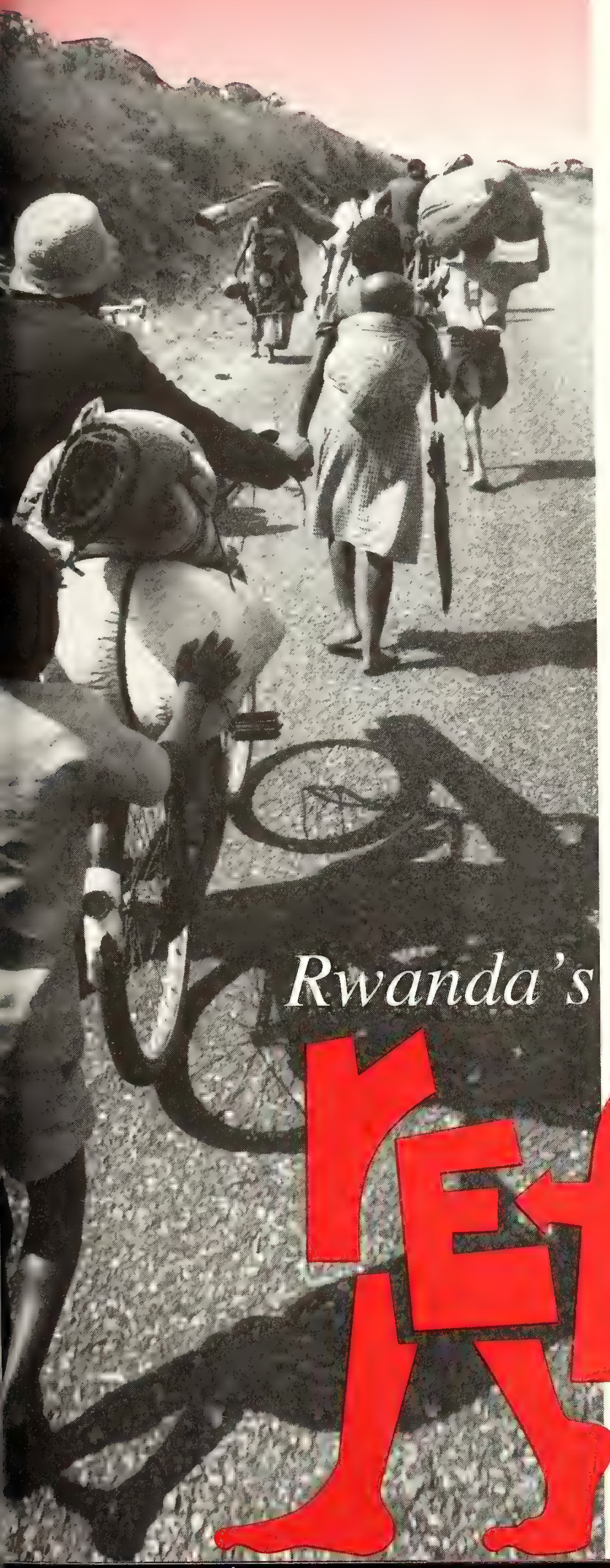
I do not think I as a white male reared in a culture of privilege can ever understand the grief my brothers and sisters of color have experienced through racism. However, I do know that a position of humility, sincere questioning, sensitivity and respect is nearly always met with acceptance and love, even across these long-standing racial divides.

I also know I am confronted daily with the need to repent of the arrogant attitudes I have learned, which cause me to prejudge, discredit or even fear my neighbors of other races. Let us not forget the need to identify and actively resist the racist presumptions that confront us every day.

Merlin Friesen is a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Pine Ridge, S.D. He works in a medical clinic.

- A Mennonite Central Committee publication
- November 1994
- vol 17
- no 4

MCC contact



Rwanda's REFUGEES

the hope & horror

North Americans respond to Rwanda, page 2

MCC's response to Rwandan Refugees, page 3

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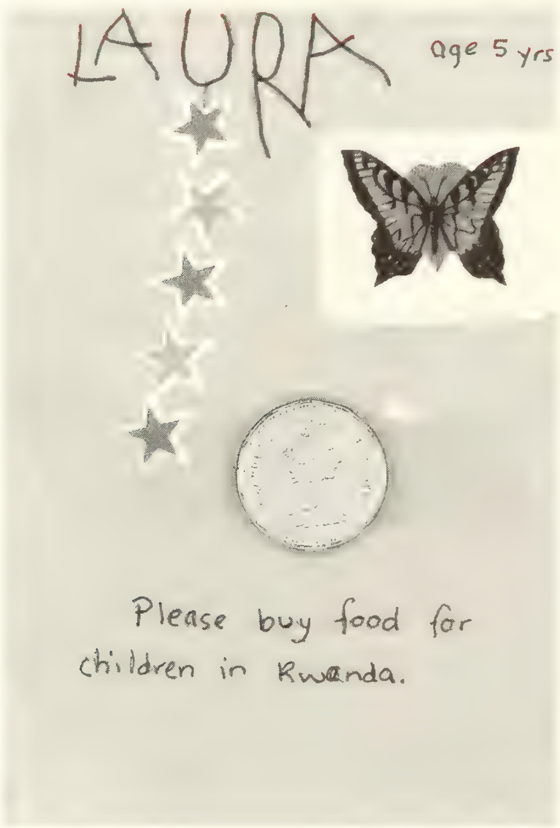
North Americans respond to Rwanda


LAURA
age 5 yrs
Please buy food for children in Rwanda.

When the enormous needs in Rwanda became known, people all across North America pitched in to assist.

In Winnipeg, two 10-year-old girls published their own newspaper, sold it to friends and relatives and raised $50. At Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey, a student launched a clothing drive among the seminarians. An inmate in Muncie, Ind., called MCC to see if she could collect clothing from other inmates. "Unfortunately, there wasn't enough time to get anything going," says Howard Zehr, director of the MCC U.S. Office of Crime and Justice, who took the call.

"There was a groundswell of support once we got the word out," says MCC Central States Resource Coordinator David Gerber. "We had a steady stream of volunteers coming," adds Cookie Wiebe, who coordinates the Material Resource Centre at MCC's office in Newton, Kan. In Newton one woman was so moved that she cried. "Volunteering was one thing she could do to help," says Wiebe.

Many people were moved to action because of the horrific scenes on TV. At a seniors' residence in Winnipeg, some residents couldn't sleep after seeing the pictures. They took a collection and sent it to MCC. In Whistler, B.C., a woman made colorful donation jars she asked local businesses to put near their registers. More than $550 Cdn/$400 U.S. was collected in a few weeks.

Some contributions came from local businesses. The National Association of Decorators and Tole Painters, with offices in Newton, Kan., donated 580 new sweatshirts. A Winnipeg business gave a cheque for $10,000 Cdn./$7,299 U.S. "We've had a good year and thought we should share with others," the owner wrote.

Some contributions came through music. In Clearbrook, B.C., a group of classical musicians and singers got together on short notice to sing and perform to raise money for Rwanda. A Rosenort, Man., family that sings gospel and country music hosted a community barbecue for Rwanda. A well-known Canadian gospel singer gave a benefit concert at a local theater.

Many people sent letters with their cheques. "My sister and I are poor by Canadian standards, but we are incredibly rich by the standards of the refugees pouring into Zaire from Rwanda," said one letter that accompanied a cheque for $500. "I only wish we could afford to give more."

Some donations came from people who have already made their regular contribution for overseas relief and development work. "I already sent you my annual donation of $600 for your general relief work," wrote one Canadian donor. "However, it is impossible not to help more when one sees the terrible tragedy in Rwanda. I only wish I could send another $600—find enclosed my cheque for $150."

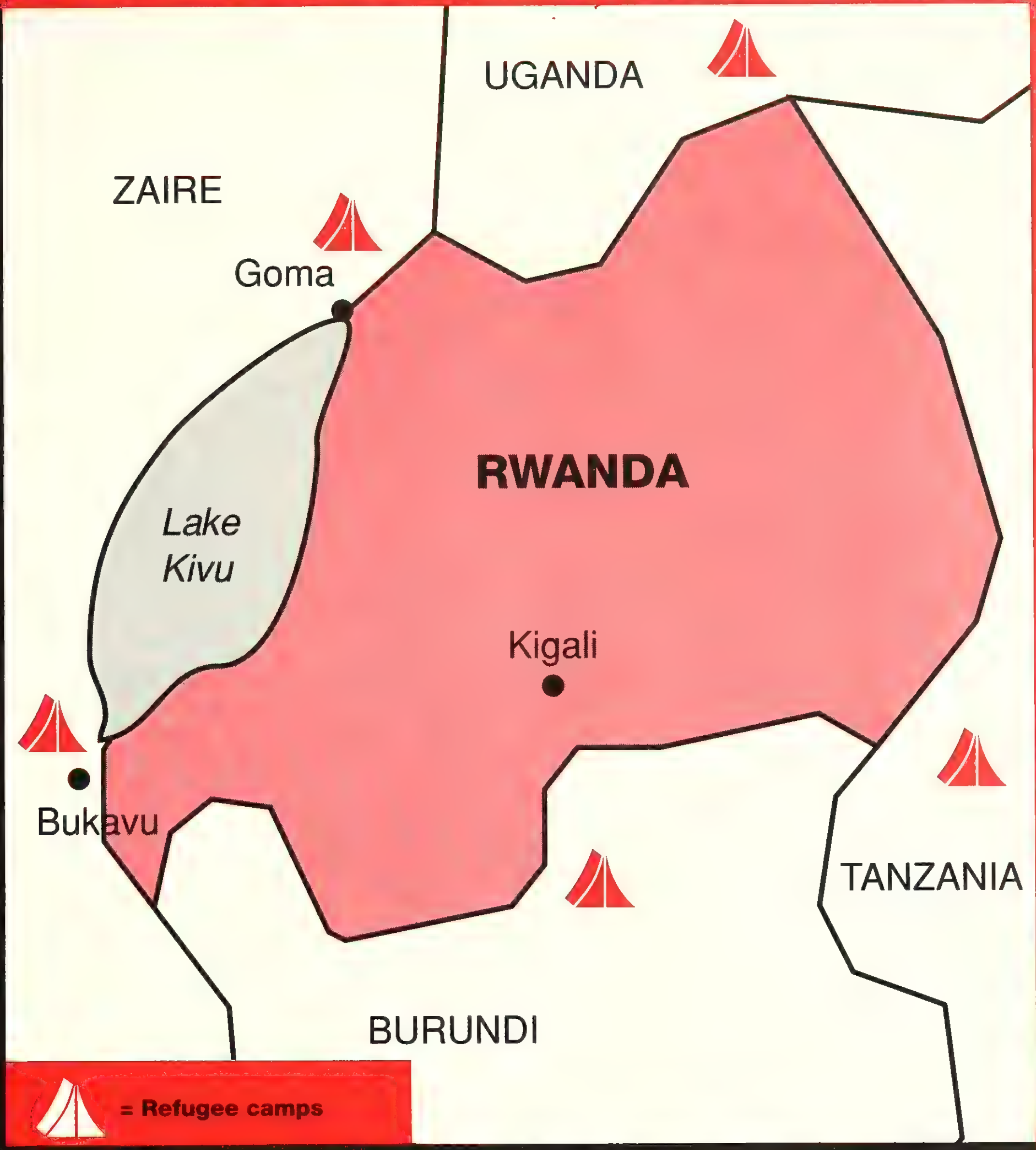
Some people almost apologized for not being able to send more. "This is just a drop in the bucket when you think of the need," wrote one woman, "but maybe you will receive many other drops and then have enough to help."

Some letters contain prayers. "I pray God will bless this little gift and pray that it can bring a little help," wrote one woman. Another prayed for the people who are providing the relief: "I'm so thankful there are many caring people who are helping, and pray they will not get weary when the problem is so severe."

••• **Rick Fast, John Longhurst**
MCC and MCC Canada Communications

Rwanda's

REFUGEES



MCC's response to Rwandan Refugeees

FOOD

MCC is sending, with other Canadian church groups, 6,000 metric tons of food valued at $5.3 million Cdn./3.8 million U.S. through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. This shipment is currently being delivered to Rwandan refugees in eastern Zaire. MCC's share is valued at $4.9 million Cdn./$3.5 million U.S.

MCC sent Unimix, a high-protein food mixture, and blankets, valued at $69,400 Cdn./$50,000 U.S., to Rwandan refugee children in Goma. MCC helped purchase about 10 tons of Ugandan drought-resistant sorghum seed, valued at $4,170 Cdn./$3,000 U.S. for Rwandans returning home from Zaire. It was distributed by the Nairobi-based International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics.

MCC has participated with other Canadian church groups in sending 1,000 metric tons of beans to Tanzania through the Relief Committee to Canadian Foodgrains Bank. These beans are being given by the Tanzania Christian Refugee Service and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee to Tanzanians who earlier shared their food with Rwandan refugees. MCC's share was valued at $250,000 Cdn./$180,000 U.S.

PROGRAMS

MCC is planning a three-year $2.7 million Cdn./$2 million U.S. program to help shelter, feed and care for refugees. Much of this work will center in Bukavu, 100 kilometers/62 miles south of Goma.

MCC is providing grief and trauma counselling training for church workers and others in the Benaco (Tanzania) refugee camp. This training will lay the groundwork for counselling programs for Rwandans traumatized by recent events.

MCC provided a $13,900 Cdn./$10,000 U.S. grant to the All Africa Conference of Churches in May to help it provide Rwandan and Burundi church leaders with peacemaking/reconciliation skills.

MCC is supporting a program in Burundi that trains Hutu and Tutsi young people in reconciliation and construction skills. The youth will work together rebuilding houses destroyed in ethnic fighting that is also occurring in Burundi.

CLOTHING

Two planeloads of warm clothing, more than 18,000 kilograms/40,000 pounds, arrived in Bukavu in mid-September. Two more containers filled with clothing and blankets are being sent by ship.

BEAUTY AND THE BEASTLINESS

Talking out of both sides of our mouth?

"The statistics, video footage and heart-rending stories of dislocation and death fall far short of conveying the suffering that continues to take place in Goma and Bukavu, Zaire. The sights we have seen defy description," wrote the four members of the assessment team MCC sent to eastern Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi in July to investigate the needs there.

In the same week, however, in the same report, this same team said that while in Zaire they were "moved to tears by incredibly beautiful images": images of children, 6 to 8 years, lovingly caring for younger sisters and brothers, their parents gone; images of Zairian pastors and church workers opening doors, pockets and hearts to refugees; images of trios of adults—two able-bodied, one too weak to stand alone—walking to food and water distribution sites.

Do these portrayals of Africa—images of strength and images of horror—mean we are talking out of both sides of our mouth? Not really, unless one sees an acknowledgement of both good and evil as being contradictory.

"...we get ourselves in trouble, not when we talk about both good and evil, but rather when we talk about only evil, only good, only weakness, only strength, only ugliness or only beauty."

Africans see both suffering and joy, strength and weakness, good and evil—as exist in all other continents and all other citizens of the world.

This is nothing new. The Bible, New Testament and Old, contains story after story of the struggle between good and evil. Over centuries, Christians everywhere have acknowledged the struggle of good and evil within themselves. Paul in Romans 7:15 (RSV) talks about that struggle: "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate."

As Christians, as service workers, as communicators, we get ourselves in trouble, not when we talk about both good and evil, but rather when we talk about only evil, only good, only weakness, only strength, only ugliness or only beauty.

Some people would go so far as to say beauty, hope and strength cannot exist without ugliness, despair and weakness, just as courage is not courage unless there is fear.

I do not go that far. I am inspired when I see people serving others rather than themselves. It is always heartwarming to see children care for younger siblings. I can recognize beauty, without knowing ugliness. But the beauty that exists in the absence of ugliness is a monotone, flat beauty when compared with the full-splendored beauty one finds in the midst of ugliness.

The selflessness of the trios of adult refugees the MCC assessment team saw—two able-bodied adults helping a weak adult to food and water—was all-the-more convicting because these refugees had been caught up in the horrors of earlier blood-letting selfishness.

Psalm 23's image of sheep grazing in a quiet pasture is a strong image of tranquility that appeals to and comforts many Christians. But the image in Isaiah 11:6,7 of the wolf living with the lamb and the leopard lying down with the goat is an even stronger image of the peace God wills for creation.

May we as Christians, as we witness to others about God's work and will in the world, acknowledge both the beautiful and the ugly, the strength and the Achilles' heels, the good and the evil.

In this way only will our witness be honest about the evil we see and the shalom God has promised.

•••Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker
MCC Communications

Iraqi soldier

Contact Press Images Inc./Photo by Kenneth Jarecke

the roots of ethnic conflict

What are the roots of the ethnic conflicts ravaging so many places, including Rwanda, former Yugoslavia and Northern Ireland? Why are people who, on the surface, seem similar to one another falling into a frenzy of bloody fratricide?

Tedd Robert Gurr provides some answers in his 1993 work, "Minorities at Risk, A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts." Gurr uses the term "communal group" to include "ethnic groups," "minorities" and "peoples." He defines them as "fuzzy sets of people... not precisely bounded either politically or socially." Rather, they are groups whose members share a distinctive identity based on cultural traits and customs that matter to them.

Thus, Serbs, Croats and Bosnians have not lived in isolated territories but scattered among one another. They have lacked precise political boundaries but other factors, such as shared history, have helped define each group.

Other bases for common identity may include myths, religion, language, ethnicity and region of residence. Outside pressures on a group usually strengthen that group's sense of identity.

Groups are more apt to come into conflict with other groups if they are what Garr calls "politicized," that is, if the group has experienced discrimination and if the members or other supporters have engaged in political action to defend the group's interests.

The largest number of politicized groups are found in Asia and Africa south of the Sahara.

"High concentrations of politicized minorities do not necessarily translate into high magnitudes of violent conflict," if the government successfully incorporates minorities, Gurr says.

"Nonetheless, most countries with high proportions of politicized minorities have had protracted communal conflicts in the past and have high potential for such conflict in the future," he adds.

The African states south of the Sahara are more ethnically diverse than countries in other regions partly because European colonizers arbitrarily set country boundaries without regard to existing African political or cultural boundaries.

"European rule also created or reinforced hierarchies among the conquered peoples, because the colonizers almost invariably favored some traditional rulers and tribes over others," Garr writes. Hence, great diversity and history—not some undefined "African" trait—contribute to the many conflicts in that continent.

Fewer conflicts are likely in Asia because although the 21 countries of East, Southeast and South Asia have the second largest number of minorities at risk, their total numbers are quite small.

Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are home to the third largest concentration of politicized ethnic groups, primarily due to the former Soviet Union's expansionist policies. And Yugoslavia, says Gurr, "has been a tinderbox of communal conflict since it was created in 1919."

Certain global changes of the past 50 years—consolidation of state power, the emergence of a global economy and the communications revolution—have also intensified many communal groups' grievances.

Modern communications systems, for example, make ethnic groups more aware of their disadvantages, bring them in closer contact with supporters elsewhere, and help leaders mobilize followings. But it's not just that we are more aware of conflicts around the world, now that we can see them on our TVs. There has been a sharp increase of ethnic conflict since the 1950s. The magnitude of nonviolent political action by the 233 groups studied by Gurr doubled between 1950 and 1990 and the amount of violent protest and rebellion both quadrupled.

As population grows and groups increasingly encroach upon one another's territories, how can ethnic groups peacefully co-exist? Gurr suggests that states must both recognize and strengthen the diverse groups within their boundaries. Elise Boulding maintains that passing authority to communal groups will help resolve a fundamental problem of modern states: they are too large and too far removed from many of their citizens to understand or deal with their local concerns.

Members of communal groups should enjoy the right to individual and collective existence and to cultural self-expression without fear of political repression, Gurr says. By the same token, he adds, such groups should not impose their own cultural standards or political agenda on other peoples.

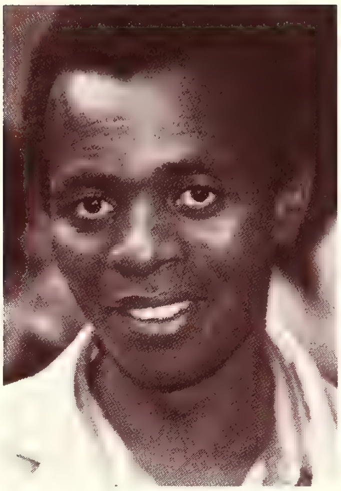
•••Emily Will
MCC Communications

Dave Klassen, of Kitchener, Ont., arrived in eastern Zaire in mid-August to work on the Mennonite refugee assistance team. Following are his photos and excerpts from a diary he is keeping. He returns to Canada in November.

Bukavu Diary

***The local churches** are amazing. They have refugees living inside and outside of the churches for weeks. I wonder if we North American Christians would allow people to erect tents, light fires and dig latrines on our manicured church lawns? When I asked a pastor why they would welcome refugees in this way, his response was: "Of course we should welcome them. Where else would they go?"*

The camps are filled with children, many of them hungry. When I go outside our compound, two or three immediately come up to me, hands cupped, asking for food, or money to buy food.



An hour away at Moukou, is a camp with about 1,000 refugees living in school buildings and a few tents. *They are educated, well-dressed, many with cars. Jerome, an engineer, speaks English. He had owned a house, had a business and traveled abroad. He and his large family don't know when they will go back. It could be several years. I may work with him to build latrines for their camp.*

A Zairian church nearby is trying to help. *Early in the morning the women from the local church cook food for refugee children. They stoke the fire and mix the porridge. The children are so hungry they can hardly wait. When they have eaten everything in their bowls they lick them until they are spotless. I don't think many of them eat much, if anything, for lunch or supper.*

I felt like I saw God in those children. They have seen and felt so many hard things in their short lives, yet they seem happy and are trying to find the good things in life by helping and loving each other.

Rwanda's
REFUGEES

MCC country profile

Rwanda

Population: Rwanda—more than 7 million, with many outside the country
MCC involved since: 1994

Until earlier this year, few people in North America knew anything about or gave much thought to Rwanda. But the massacres this spring and the flood of refugees following the end of the civil war brought this nation to the forefront.

In April, when the massacres started, Rwanda had 7.5 million people—one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Hutus made up 86 percent of the population and Tutsis 13 percent. For centuries Rwanda was a strong, well-organized kingdom. In the 19th century Germany and then Belgium colonized Rwanda before it achieved independence in 1962. The country is 75 percent Christian (54 percent Roman Catholic, 15 percent Protestant, 6 percent Adventists, according to the All Africa Conference of Churches).

Tensions between Hutus and Tutsis boiled over into conflict and massacres in 1959, 1961, 1963, 1990 and again this year. While the conflicts are widely understood to be the result of ethnic tension, the situation is more complex. The two groups are also divided along economic lines, with Tutsis historically better off. Enmity between the two groups deepened during the colonial era when the Belgians promoted the minority Tutsis to levels of management and privilege. Resentments between the two groups has, tragically, resulted in terrible massacres. Tensions were exacerbated by the willingness of other countries to sell weapons to both sides in the conflict.

MCC is responding to the needs of Rwandan refugees together with its partners. In eastern Zaire, MCC is working with the Church of Christ of Zaire to shelter and feed refugees. In Tanzania, MCC is working with the Christian Council of Tanzania to provide crisis counselling for refugees traumatized by recent events. MCC is also carefully watching the situation in neighboring Burundi, where simmering tensions between Tutsis and Hutus may erupt into conflict. MCC expects to be involved in response to Rwandans for at least the next three years.

Resources from MCC

* * *

***The Innocent*, a 23-minute video drama produced by JRB MOTION GRAPHICS, LTD., for MCC, examines personal responsibility for the violence and suffering caused by the lingering effects of war. Winner of the Silver Award in the Religion/Ethics category at the 1994 International Communications Film and Video Festival, this video is based on a true story of a Lao woman—one of thousands of people—killed years after the end of the conflict in Southeast Asia because of bombies littering the earth. In the drama a judge must determine who is responsible for the woman's death. Provokes thoughtful dialogue on peace-related issues. Discussion guide included. Available from all MCC offices.**

* * *

***Step of Faith*, a 23-minute video, features four stories about people who took a step of faith to respond to needs in Canada through MCC. Shows MCC programs with people with disabilities, with people with AIDS, in job creation, mediation and with Native people. Available from all MCC offices.**

Is God calling you to fill one of these urgent personnel openings?

Akron: SELFHELP Crafts office manager

* * *

Bangladesh: health and nutrition advisor

* * *

Burkina Faso: community development/water resources

* * *

Chad: conflict resolution worker

* * *

Haiti: country representative

* * *

Labrador: adult education/computer instructor

* * *

Newfoundland: computer instructor

* * *

New Orleans: registered nurse

* * *

South Africa: country representative

If you are or someone you know is interested in any of these positions, contact MCC Personnel Services, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151. In Canada, contact MCC Personnel Services, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381.

MCC Contact (ISSN 1060-3492) is publishe in February, May, August and November by Mennonite Central Committee, PO Box 5 Akron, PA 17501-0500. Editors are Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker, Pearl Senser and John Longhurst. Design by Ronald Tinsl Copies are sent in bulk to church addresses upon request. Address correspondence to **M Contact** Editor, 21 South 12th Street, PO Bo 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. In Canada, address correspondence to **MCC Contact** Editor, MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Dr., Winnipe MB, R3T 5K9. Second class postage paid at Akron, Pa., and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. Printed in U.S.A.

Photo credits: page 1, Don Edkins; page 5, Howard Zehr, John Leckie, Bruce Hildebrand, Kenneth Jarecke/CPI; pages 6,7,8,9, Jon Warren, Dave Klassen; page 11, Sandy Muns page 12,Dave Klassen.

Famine victims fed by MCC, Ugandan churches this summer

As the Rwandan refugee crisis consumed international aid agencies' attention and resources this summer, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) fed some 100,000 victims of an overlooked, localized famine in nearby northeastern Uganda.

MCC workers Lynn and Sandy Munson became aware of the unfolding tragedy in early June when they visited a woman in Teso District who had tried to hang herself because she had no food for her famished children. Church leaders told them of some 1,000 hunger-related deaths.

In response, MCC contributed $69,000 Cdn./ $50,000 U.S. for 150 metric tons of beans, cassava, sorghum and other food. Hands in Service, a Ugandan development agency operated by local churches, purchased and distributed the food to some 25 locations, many of them small, isolated villages.

Sandy accompanied six of the 24 truckloads of MCC relief food. As rains muddied the winding trails through the bush, a 150-kilometer/93-mile trip sometimes took 12 hours. At one point the truck slid into a hole, and Sandy and the others worked four hours to free it. But, says Sandy, MCC/Hands in Service efforts to reach these remote areas saved many lives.

A combination of conflict, drought and crop disease created the food shortage. The region's two major groups, the Iteso and the Karamoja, have a long-standing tradition of raiding one another's cattle. Within the past years, however, the Karamoja have obtained AK-47s and other sophisticated weapons and have stolen some 6 million Iteso cattle, which represented "savings accounts" to their owners. The cattle had also been used to pull plows. Without cattle, people had to dig their fields by hand, making it nearly impossible to grow enough food for their families.

The Iteso, already economically devastated by this livestock loss, then saw drought and disease wither their crops and their cassava. Cassava, which can remain in the ground for up to five years, has traditionally been the local "famine insurance" crop.

Along with the food, MCC distributed four truckloads of disease-resistant cassava cuttings to farmers. And the Munsons, who recently returned to Regina, Sask., reported it looks like the region may soon harvest bumper crops. The Munsons are members of Westhill Park Baptist Church in Regina.

••• Pearl Sensenig
MCC Communications

Rwanda not only place MCC was involved in this summer:

Although Rwanda dominated the world's attention this past summer, it was not the only country to require assistance. Workers served in other countries as well; a few are listed below. We continue to appreciate your contributions, which enable us to respond to many emergency needs not in the news.

In Laos, MCC's largest non-food project ever got underway when a de-mining course for Laotians began in August. The $1.3 million Cdn./ $1 million U.S. project is equipping and teaching Laotians how to locate and safely explode live bombs left from the Vietnam War.

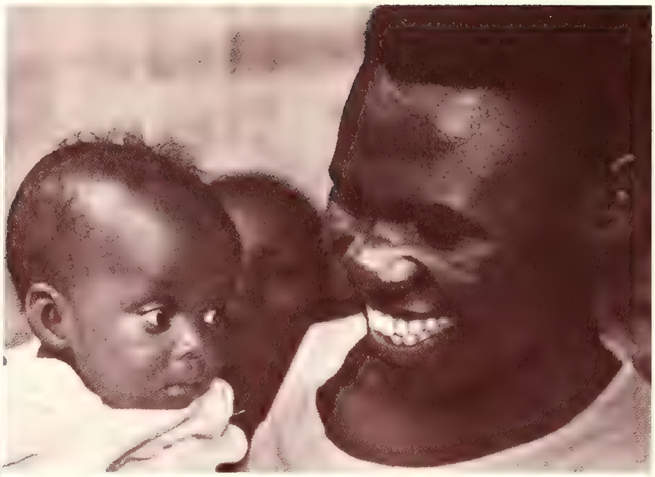
MCC responded to flooding in India that left at least 50,000 people homeless. MCC gave $9,700 Cdn./$7,000 U.S. to purchase water purification tablets, a 15-day supply of rice for 500 families, and tarpaulins to shelter 340 families.

In Mexico, MCC responded to the needs of Mennonite colonists who suffered successive crop failures.

In the United States Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers cleaned up following July flooding in Georgia.

MCC provided 437,500 water purification tablets to flooded villages in China.

After a June earthquake in Colombia, MCC provided $6,944 Cdn./ $5,000 U.S. to enable the Colombian Mennonite church to assist affected communities.



Give us this day our daily bread

His name is Safari. He is 27 years old and the father of three children. He works as a high school teacher in a church-run institution but lives by the grace of God.

We were sitting together talking about life in Zaire and the incredible hardships Zairian people have had to survive as a result of their bankrupt country. We talked of many things; at one point Safari asked me, "Do you people pray for your daily bread?" He was well read and understood how wealthy we are in the West. He doubted that we actually pray for our daily bread with sincerity.

Safari went on to share how he has learned to trust God for each day. Often his wife will scrape the bottom of the jar, putting together the meal of the day. The children who watch ask, "What will we eat tomorrow?" They have learned well their mother's answer: "God will provide."

"The children," says Safari, "have learned a deep faith and trust in God."

When I asked Safari how the influx of Rwandan refugees has affected life in his community, he said that prices of food have risen to 10 times the price of a month ago. The prices of other household items have also risen dramatically in response to demand. But he said this without much emotion.

To him survival was still the same: God will provide!

••• Dave Klassen
MCC Ontario

Klassen served August to November with the Mennonite team in Bukavu, Zaire, assisting Rwandan refugees.

Giving projects

•••

(January) Kenya hosts 350,000 refugees, most from Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia. They receive United Nations support but not enough. $6.65 Cdn./$5 U.S. buys a blanket; $6.65 Cdn./$5 U.S. buys soap and toiletries for a family; $13.35 Cdn./$10 U.S. provides food for a family for a week; $13.35 Cdn./$10 U.S. buys schoolbooks; $20 Cdn./$15 U.S. pays rent for a month; $33 Cdn./$25 U.S. outfits a kitchen. Please include project number 618-2300 with your contribution.

•••

(February) As peace returns to Mozambique, people who fled the war are returning home. MCC is providing compassion grants.
35¢ Cdn./25¢ U.S. buys a loaf of bread;
$1.35 Cdn./$1 U.S. buys corn for a family of four;
$6.65 Cdn./$5 U.S. provides medicine for a sick child;
$13.35 Cdn./$10 U.S. pays a water/electric bill;
$13.35 Cdn./$10 U.S. buys a bus ticket home. Please include project number 627-7000 with your contribution.

•••

(March) In Dese, Ethiopia, health care workers serve some 10,000 people forced from their homes by war and unrest. Crowded into tents and warehouses, they are trying to reestablish their lives in a new place. MCC health workers treat medical problems, provide supplementary food for hungry children and teach people how to prevent disease. $11 Cdn./$8 U.S. covers health care for a day; $67 Cdn./$48 U.S. for a week. Please include project number 611–4009 with your contribution.

Material resources projects

•••

(January and February) New bar soap: In 1994 MCC sent 32,659 kg/72,000 lbs of soap to Bosnia, Haiti, Russia, Sudan, Yugoslavia. Inventory has been depleted. Your gift of soap helps people stay healthy and feel clean. Purchase the brand you like best; we prefer wrapped bars of bath or family size.

•••

(March) School kits: MCC is shipping 13,000 school kits for Iraq's schoolchildren. When a prior shipment arrived and kits distributed one worker noted: "It was a privilege to see the delight on the children's faces when they opened their bags. There were squeals of pleasure, as all these items are beyond the purchasing power of most families."

Contact the nearest MCC office for information on how to assemble a school kit.

Please include the following information with all contributions for Contact giving projects:

Name of project: ____________________

Your name: ____________________

Address: ____________________

Conference or church affiliation: ____________________

Project no. ____________________

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg MB R3T 5K9

The dragon and the woman in labor

The second of a two-part study of Revelation 12

Mathew Swora

In part one of this study we saw, through the metaphor of pregnancy, how God may work slowly, sometimes painfully, in our lives. We saw how a vulnerable, pregnant Mary, like the woman of Revelation 12, trusted in God through the difficult process of birth. But what is the vulnerable Mary to do in the face of immediate danger?

Peril is the overall theme of the vision of Revelation 12: the war of the seven-headed dragon against a woman in labor and her infant. The Dragon, John says, is the devil, Satan. The Dragon and its warfare are the peril that threatens our spiritual labors.

That it has many heads and many horns indicates that the Evil One has influence in many high places. The social, economic and political symptoms of evil are only the tips of the iceberg—or the heads and the horns.

In this war, the lopsided odds in favor of this monster show how courageous the acts of labor and motherhood are. Courage and yet vulnerability characterize the pregnant woman of Revelation 12. That's what the angel Gabriel's announcement required of Mary. One peril Mary risked was death by stoning. Or more likely, misunderstanding and rejection, let alone the ruin of all hopes for a normal wedding and a normal family.

Her pregnancy became political. In God's war against this human-eating beast, her womb became a weapon. Mary comes across as one of God's warriors, armed only with prayer, courage, a supportive community of Joseph, a few relatives and a Savior in her womb.

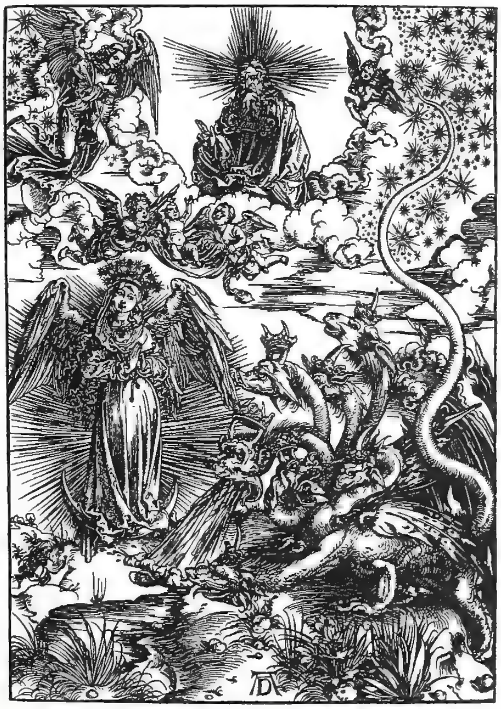
That's how God fights.

"The Dragon goes off to make war against the rest of Mary's offspring, those who keep God's commandments and who hold to the testimony of Jesus" (Revelation 12:17). That's us, the church. We are also in a vulnerable position. The history of the church is also a story of courage and vulnerability. Baptism is not for the faint at heart. Always, somewhere, some part of the church is suffering for the testimony of Jesus.

Suffering: On a more personal level, a question I often face is, Why does God allow his devotees to suffer? A close friend, Robert, lived 26 years with muscular dystrophy. One muscle after another degenerated until, finally, his lungs gave up. I knew him the last three or four years of his life. He had no explanation for why God would permit him to suffer and die as he did. I have no foolproof answer either.

But the fact of suffering is often a symptom of this war. This is a war that we fight without the usual weapons of steel or gunpowder. That makes us vulnerable and requires courage. If in our times of suffering we throw out our faith, our witness and our integrity, then we are only giving the Dragon what it wants. That amounts to handing over the only weapons it fears.

"And there was war in heaven" (Revelation 12:7). Michael and the angels fought the Dragon and its minions, defeated them and cast them down to earth (12:7-10). We don't know when or how this heavenly combat did or will take place. But that image tells us that all heaven is pulling for us. And so is creation, as the Earth opens up to intercept the flood of evils the Dragon vomits up after the fleeing woman. Watch the news or look in the local video store to see what evils the Dragon is still vomiting up. The Archangel's victory and the Dragon's downfall tell us that the war is as good as won for the woman and us, her children. Thus we move from the peril to the promise. Even if the battles are not over, the war is as good as won.



The other promise is that pregnancy gives way to birth. Mary may have had many questions, but she said to the angel Gabriel, "I am the Lord's servant, may it be to me as you have said" (Luke 1:38). God answered her questions as he rescued her and her Holy Child from one diabolical plot after another. So it is with us, the church. The church the Caesars tried to suppress is now a worldwide movement. The church is growing in Russia and China. Native churches are starting again in Mongolia after 600 years.

Robert's last words were, "I'm going to where the colors come from." That he suffered so much was a defeat of sorts. That he lived and died so full of faith was an even greater defeat for the Evil One.

This image of the war between the Dragon and the woman promises us there will be more by way of struggle and suffering. As we approach the end, good must grow to match evil in its intensity. But the image also promises us victory.

Sometimes, before God can distribute true peace, God has to disturb false peace. The birth of the Christ child was the fulfillment of the prophets' dreams. The Incarnation is also the Invasion.

Like Mary, we are vulnerable. Our weapons are hers: courage, faith, love, integrity and our witness. The Dragon is no match for such weapons. Advent reminds us of this warfare as well. If we are patient and faithful, we will see, from our hidden and seemingly fruitless labors, the birth of the New Creation and the downfall of the Dragon. Peace be with us.

Mathew Swora is pastor at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.

Fiscal health

Rewards and risks of international investing

Know what you are getting into before you invest.

J.B. Miller

For many years the conservative investor was comfortable leaving investments in certificates of deposit and other similar safe, insured income-earning instruments. During periods of high inflation however, returns on these investments have not kept pace with the cost of living. Many investors have seen a significant decline in their earning power.

To offset this and to diversify risk in an investment portfolio, many investors have begun investing in stocks, or equities, as a hedge against inflation as well as to improve returns. Historically the returns on equities have outperformed more conservative investments, such as certificates of deposits and bonds. As a result, over the last number of years money has been moving from certificates of deposit and bonds to equities, as evidenced by the incredible increase in equity mutual fund assets. Many people have sought greater diversification of their portfolios by investing in the stock market, although money has begun to shift back into bond funds with the recent rise in U.S. interest rates.

More recently some investors have sought even greater diversification by considering investments in international markets. While the United States has the largest equity market in the world, it is not always the best place to earn the highest rate of return, and Canadian equities have performed no better. Since 1980, Canadian equities have outperformed U.S. equities only twice, 1983 and 1987, when comparing the Toronto Stock Exchange 300 Composite Index with the Standard & Poor's 500 index. And since 1975, the U.S. stock market has never been the top performer when compared with the world's top nine stock markets. In fact, it has been in the top three only four times. So the benefits of international investing are apparent. As in any investment, however, investors must understand the associated risks.

The easiest way to invest in international equities is through mutual funds. With mutual funds, you gain diversification as well as professional management. When approaching international mutual funds, you should become familiar with the terminology. Generally speaking, these funds are referred to as global and international. "Global" generally means that the fund invests in foreign markets but may include equities from the country in which the fund is domiciled, in other words, the United States or Canada. International funds generally have their investments almost exclusively outside the United States or Canada.

A smart investor may not understand every nuance, but you should understand and be comfortable with the associated risk.

Pacific Rim: Funds are also available by region. A European fund would concentrate investments in the European market, while a Pacific Rim fund would be focused in the Orient. You may obtain further focus by purchasing funds that are limited to certain countries. Funds are available that purchase equities only in specific countries such as Mexico, Japan or Germany. Emerging market funds are also available. Investments in these funds concentrate on countries that are less developed financially than Western financial markets.

From global to country-specific, this wide range of choice can make the entrance into international equities seem difficult, but it shouldn't be seen as any more difficult than selecting a good domestic mutual fund.

Regardless of where you invest in international equities, keep in mind that there is risk. You could lose a part or all of your investment. Some international investments contain more risk than others. As with all investments, work with someone you trust when dealing with international investments. You may pay a sales commission to a broker or planner to help you choose the right fund and the amount that you should invest. This is often money well spent for the person entering international investing for the first time. A professional can help you understand risk and give you a perspective that may not always be available through fund literature.

As always, you should ask lots of questions, and don't invest until you have a full understanding of what you are doing. A smart investor may not understand every nuance, but you should understand and be comfortable with the associated risk.

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Questions?

Send any questions you have about stewardship matters to J.B. Miller, c/o *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

News

Hong Kong conference holds first ordination

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Over 100 people filled the sanctuary and foyer of the Grace Mennonite Church in Kowloon, Hong Kong, last Nov. 27 to witness the ordination of mission worker George Veith. It was the first time the Conference of Mennonites in Hong Kong had performed a pastoral ordination.

Long-time pastor Daniel Ngai, who was ordained prior to his involvement with Mennonites, initiated the call for Veith to be ordained, based on his qualifications. Veith pastors the Hope Mennonite Church, Kowloon, together with Stephen Chung, who graduated from a seminary this past summer.

Retired mission worker Hugh Sprunger, who conducted the ordination, said that the leaders hoped Veith's ordination would be seen as a signal that the church is moving ahead, noting that the conference would like to ordain several national leaders in the future.

> **'The Mennonites in Hong Kong were recognizing God's call as we had.'**
>
> ***Mal Braun***

Ordained Mennonite pastors in Hong Kong are responsible for conducting congregational rites such as baptism and communion. They also may be called upon for pastoral tasks in the larger conference.

There are three Mennonite churches in Hong Kong with a membership of about 125. The majority of the members are under age 40.

Veith and his wife, Tobia, have been serving in Hong Kong as General Conference mission workers since July 1991. They are members of Cornerstone Church—Mennonite in Saskatoon.

Veith has a bachelor's degree in religious education. He has completed studies at both Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

Mal and Eleanor Braun brought greetings on behalf of Cornerstone Church—Mennonite and Grace Mennonite Church in Regina, Sask.; both churches are mission partners with the Veiths. They were asked to attend the ordination by the Conference of Mennonites in Hong Kong.

"Eleanor and I were thrilled that we had the opportunity to be a part of the larger church," said Mal, pastor of Cornerstone Church—Mennonite, noting that the congregation had commissioned the Veiths for overseas service. "The Mennonites in Hong Kong were recognizing God's call as we had."

Mal said he was impressed with the mission workers and church members in Hong Kong. "They are a dynamic group who are enthusiastic about their faith," he said. *Carla Reimer*

MCC Canada sorts process on statements

Kitchener, Ont. (Meetinghouse)—How statements to government are drafted came under scrutiny at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada annual meeting here Nov. 17-18, 1994.

This was one of four discussion topics scheduled into the agenda. The Ottawa Office provided a ready-made case study for the discussion.

As part of their report from Ottawa, Chris Derksen Hiebert and Joanne Epp brought up a statement about the federal government's social policy reform proposals.

Several board members took issue with the sentence: "We urge the government to resist making debt and deficit reduction the cornerstone of policy making." Without deficit reduction, they argued, there would be no money for social programs.

Other board members said the debate needs to be broadened; they advocated taking more money from the defense budget, or requiring businesses to pay more tax.

The discussion shifted quickly to the process of how statements to government are drafted. In the past year,

Inside the news

Special focus: Appalachia / p. 17

Long-time mission worker dies at 97 / p. 20

Women with no schooling who live in developing countries have on average 6.9 children, according to *U.S. News & World Report*. That number fell to 3.9 among women with seven or more years of schooling.

• • •

Christian Peacemaker Corps teamed with local organizations and neighbors to designate several blocks a safe area for trick-or-treaters in the south Columbia Heights neighborhood of Washington, D.C. Over 40 residents displayed fluorescent green signs that said "Trick-or-Treaters Welcome" as a way for parents to know that they could approach a home confidently. "Orange hat" members, community volunteers, provided security for the evening. "I've never seen so many people out in this neighborhood," said a patroling police officer. (*Signs of the Times*)

• • •

***Oregon Farm Bureau News* reports that an environmental consultant has filed a petition with the U.S. Department of the Interior proposing to list the Old Order Amish and Mennonites as endangered. The Endangered Species Act allows the listing of isolated populations of mammals, and the petition claims that these people qualify for protection. William Hazeltine, the petition's author, says, "The ESA allows the listing of any identifiable population of mammals, and the Amish and Mennonites seem to qualify. ... In place of genetic isolation, these people are isolated by their customs and culture." If listed, all agencies of the federal government would be obliged to do everything necessary to assure the survival of the listed population. The law also would protect these people from harassment or other forms of outside interference. (*Gospel Herald*)**

Mennonite Disaster Service's annual all-unit meeting will be held Feb. 10-11 in Saskatoon.

• • •

The Mount Olivet Mennonite Church, Huron, S.D., voted Nov. 13, 1994, to withdraw its membership from the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Northern District Conference. No reason was given for the withdrawal.

• • •

An ambassador from the Embassy of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina told Bluffton (Ohio) College students that the war in the former Yugoslavia "is a war of fascist aggression." Sven Alkalaj spoke at a Bluffton forum Dec. 6, 1994. He compared the Bosnian situation with that of the Jewish Holocaust during World War II. "Fifty years ago we vowed never to let what had happened to the Jews of Europe happen again. The excuse for the world's inaction 50 years ago was, 'We didn't know.' Today everybody knows."

• • •

Global spending for peace has increased sixfold in the past five years, and military spending is dropping, but governments still must be convinced that peace pays, according to a new study. The world spends more than 40 times as much to prepare for war as it does to promote peace, says a Worldwatch study released Dec. 10, 1994. The study puts global spending in 1994 for peace and demilitarization at $15.8 billion, up from $2.5 billion in 1989. That includes U.N. peacekeeping, base closings, conversion of defense industries, refugee repatriation and aid to the former Soviet republics for nuclear disarmament. Military spending has dropped throughout the world, from $995 billion in 1987 to an estimated $767 billion in 1994, the report says. (*The Wichita Eagle*)

MCC Canada issued over 30 communications to government, many of them on international issues such as immigration and refugees, foreign affairs and conscientious objection; some on domestic matters.

Board member David Cressman proposed that MCC Canada "routinely test draft statements with board members and with conference moderators." Aldred Neufeldt revised the proposal slightly. He urged that "resource networks of 'wise people' with diverse perspectives be drawn on in actually drafting statements."

Board members passed the proposal, with a dissenting vote from Jeanette Neufeld, who said, "It seems like we want to control the Ottawa Office."

Speaking in support of the proposal, Cressman said he felt business perspectives were missing in the response to the reform proposals.

The relationship of MCC to the business community was a second discussion topic. "How can these two worlds … be brought together in increased trust and cooperation?" was the question posed to small groups. No specific proposals emerged.

The other two discussion topics centered on MCC Canada's "strategic planning process." The board sent a summary vision statement back for more work because they felt it was not visionary enough.

'It seems like we want to control the Ottawa Office.'

Jeanette Neufeld

The board approved a summary of MCC Canada's "fields of activities," with the "global support program" on the top of the list and the domestic "peace and justice" program second.

Home or abroad? This list reaffirmed the 1992 "Red River Accord," which aims for 60 percent of revenue to be spent on overseas program. At the same time the board acknowledged the growing strength of arguments to spend more money on programs closer to home.

The next steps in strategic planning will include a more detailed process of setting priorities, and then restructuring. The tough decisions about what gets cut or shifted are still to be made.

The board approved a $19.8 million ($14.25 million U.S.) budget, with just under 60 percent of this money earmarked for relief and service work in other countries.

Of the 36 people at the table, 23 represent 11 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups; there are several members-at-large. The remaining members represent provincial MCC groups.

The most vigorous discussion, focusing on the way the board handles business, came near the end of the 12-hour agenda. A new board member, David Wall, called for fewer reports and more time for "discussion of policy and difficult questions facing us."

Others said they're not sure whether they're a constituent assembly or a board. The chair, George Richert, said the group is both, with a 10-member executive committee handling the "nitty-gritty."

Board members said they wanted more reports from the executive committee, and more say in the full range of policy matters. *Ron Rempel*

High school youth organize around MCC

Kitchener, Ont. (Meetinghouse)—High-school-age youth got inspired as they took part in the Nov. 16-19, 1994, meetings of both Mennonite Central Committee Canada and MCC Ontario.

Members of the youth delegation hope to plan a retreat or event for young people from the groups under MCC.

The purpose of the retreat would be to promote MCC and also "bring together youth from across conference lines," according to a letter drafted by three of the participants—Tina Jantzi, John Loewen and Scott Albrecht.

They added, "We believe that since we all have the same solid foundation of Christ Jesus, we need to come together to share our applications of Christian life and learn from each other."

In the letter they further suggested that a "youth council" be formed to plan the retreat and other events as well as to send a representative to the MCC Ontario board.

For further information on the proposed council, write MCC Ontario, 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1. *Ron Rempel*

Special focus: Appalachia

New home means new hope

Neon, Ky. (MCC)—When Shelby Sexton called Donald Profitt last August to ask when the rent was due on the house her family had just moved into, Profitt replied, "You don't pay rent, Shelby. You own the house."

"I thought we had to pay rent," Sexton said with an embarrassed laugh. "I'm not used to the idea of owning a house."

Watching the Sextons assume the new responsibility of owning a home couldn't have been more satisfying to Profitt, executive director of HOMES, Inc., a non-profit, low-income housing corporation.

HOMES, formed by the merger of Mennonite Central Committee's Whitesburg Home Repair unit and the Eastern Kentucky Housing Development Corporation in 1985, supplies quality affordable housing to low-income families.

A year ago, Harrison and Shelby Sexton, both in their early 20s, lived in a four-room house. Asbestos covered the walls. The floor was falling in. Live electric wires were exposed. Without insulation, the house was nearly impossible to heat in the winter.

Although the Sextons "paid" rent by doing repairs on the house, heating bills were so high they could barely live there.

Their 2-year-old, Paul Daniel, was constantly sick. His skin was chafing. His allergies and asthma were continually aggravated. He had no energy.

'Sometimes [people with low income] make the best homeowners.'

Donald Profitt

The Sextons couldn't even dream of owning a home. Even with Harrison's new job, meeting monthly bills in the old house would have been difficult. Sexton works six days a week as a driver for a furniture retailer and earns less than $340 every two weeks. He recently received health care for himself, but not for his wife and child.

"Just because you have a low income doesn't mean you can't be a homeowner," Profitt says. "Sometimes they make the best homeowners."

Profitt says that of the three homes recently built by HOMES, mortgage payments have all been paid on time.

Continued on next page

Mark Beach (MCC)

A home of their own: *MCC worker Sheryl Long (left), of Morgantown, Pa., visits Shelby Sexton and her son Paul Daniel at the Sextons' new home.*

Ploughshares Monitor reports that the world's governments, by the early 1990s, had amassed 50,000 nuclear warheads, 70,000 tons of poison gas, 45,000 combat aircraft, 172,000 main battle tanks, 155,000 artillery pieces and 2,000 warships. (_Mennonite Brethren Herald_)

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Based on local surveys, Hong Kong researcher Anthony Lambert concludes there is a minimum of 18 million Christians in China, and possibly as many as 30 million. By contrast, government-related sources estimate Christians at 7 million, while estimates by various evangelicals sometimes reach 100 million. In his research, Lambert used figures from the China Christian Council in conjunction with reports from unregistered house church leaders working at local levels.

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St. Catharines (Ont.) Laotian Mennonite Church took two large steps toward self-sufficiency this fall. The church, planted in 1980, has equipped local leaders and commissioned its pastor to new church-planting work. The church is also giving up the financial support it has received from the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada and several Niagara-area churches. The church is calling unpaid leaders from its membership, allowing MCEC to redirect funds to new Laotian outreach ministry in Mississauga, Ont. On Oct. 30, 1994, the church said farewell to its pastor, Boris Sithideth, and his wife, Bonnie. It commissioned them to church planting in the Mississauga/Toronto area. The following Sunday, Doris Gascho, MCEC conference minister, led a service of licensing for church members Kuaying Teng and Khamphong Phommaseng, who will take over leadership. (_Mennonite Reporter_)

A study by German Baptists reported in *Christianity Today* shows that former West and East Germans view German reunification differently. Most former West Germans see it as a blessing, while former East Germans describe it as a "life-changing event consisting of both good and bad elements." Key to the differences is attitudes toward possessions. East Germans never owned very much beyond their own homes and perceive the West as concerned only about possessions. They feel their values threatened by Western takeover.

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Rudy Wiebe of Edmonton received a 1994 Governor General's Award for his new novel, *A Discovery of Strangers*. Wiebe also earned an informal accolade as the only winner in either official language to raise the subject of nation-building, according to a report in Toronto's *The Globe and Mail*. "Five hundred and fifty generations have lived here," said the top English-language award winner. "Only the stories we tell each other will create us as a true Canadian people." Wiebe previously won a Governor General's Award in 1973 for *The Temptations of Big Bear*. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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The Clinton administration is preparing to unveil an arms export policy that, arms control advocates say, will set a course away from demilitarization and will direct officials who license arms exports to consider a sale's potential benefits to U.S. weapons makers. The administration is still debating whether to include in the policy an unprecedented fund to guarantee financing of arms sales abroad. "The administration is very interested in exports, which create jobs for American workers," an unnamed administration official said. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

"Not one has been a day late."

The Sexton's mortgage payment is $83 per month, an amount Shelby says they can manage. Still, they will need to depend on government supplements like food stamps and medical coverage. Medical assistance will help with the birth of their second child.

When the Sextons moved into their new house, Paul Daniel became healthier and more energetic—a different child, says Sheryl Long, MCC volunteer and family friend.

"You know, he loves it," Shelby says, sitting in their new living room. Paul Daniel lets out a yell, leaps off the couch and heads for the reading chair in the corner. Shelby Sexton smiles with satisfaction. *Mark Beach*

Builder constructs new lifestyle

Mark Beach (MCC)

Building a future: *Frank Stoffle, left, and Johnny Joseph, of Harlan, work on a house.*

Harlan, Ky. (MCC)—On a mountainside overlooking the CSX Railroad switching yards, Frank Stoffle watches workers finish framing a house and begin constructing walls and a roof.

The sounds of hammers and electric saws mix with the drone of diesel engines and the thud of coal cars attaching in train yards below. The coal will flow out of these narrow Kentucky mountains to power companies in the South and North.

The house, in its third day of construction, is being built for a low-income family by 14 volunteers from a North Carolina church. By the weekend it will have been transformed from its block foundation to an unfinished but enclosed dwelling.

For Stoffle, who works with the low-income housing organization sponsoring the project, the new house reaffirms a commitment he and his wife, Janet, have made to this mountainous region of eastern Kentucky. Along with their three children, the Stoffles left a lucrative building business near Atlanta for the more spartan lifestyle of service in Harlan County with Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Stoffle directs COAP, Christian Outreach to Appalachian People, in Harlan. Over the years COAP has served nearly 450 Harlan County families—repairing roofs, providing electrical wiring, siding and weatherization, updating septic systems and building new homes.

The Stoffles' journey to COAP reached a crossroads several years ago when Frank was completing work on a mammoth 9,000-square-foot house outside Atlanta.

The house stood 160 feet long and had seven bathrooms. A family of three planned to move in. Stoffle thought at the time, What are they going to do in this house? "It was sad," he says.

This event rattled some of the foundations of the life he and Janet were leading. "Jesus made it pretty clear when he talked about the eye of the needle," Stoffle says.

They knew a change had to come. If they were going to build homes, they wanted to use their hammer and nails for people without secure shelter. In Harlan County, the Stoffles discovered no shortage of need for improved housing, only a shortage of time and resources to meet the demands.

Eastern Kentucky's housing problem results from persistent poverty and high unemployment over the past two generations. In a place where coal mining has brought most of the jobs, Harlan County's unemployment rate remains stubbornly high at 14 percent, despite sharp increases in coal production.

The quality and availability of housing have improved since the War on Poverty in the 1960s. In 1970, nearly 40 percent of all homes in eastern Kentucky lacked adequate indoor plumbing. Today only 10 percent of all homes lack complete plumbing.

Despite such advances, the U.S. government declared 63 percent of Harlan County's housing substandard in 1990, according to Stoffle. "The more work we do," Stoffle says, "the more applicants we have."

COAP, for its part, has chosen to provide "safe, warm and dry housing for very-low-income" people, people without the resources to repair or replace their homes. "Half of COAP's clients in 1992 were elderly women," Stoffle says.

COAP has offered some employment relief by hiring nine full-time local carpenters and using local subcontractors. But it remains a drop in the unemployment bucket for the region. "We have a stack of applications for jobs paying $4.50 per hour," Stoffle says.

The Stoffles have decided to stay in Harlan County longer than a standard MCC term. Frank Stoffle arrived in Harlan with an important connection to the region. His mother was born in nearby Lynch, the same place where is grandfather is buried. Now Harlan County has become the Stoffles' new long-term home. *Mark Beach*

An education can mean a future

Hindman, Ky. (MCC)—Literacy tutor Bernie Baergen is helping Bobby Lovins, 25, get a Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED).

After two years of weekly tutoring and countless nights of studying, Lovins believes he is nearly ready to take the GED exam, which requires high-school proficiency levels of math, literature, social studies, writing and science.

Baergen and his wife, Celia Enns, left Winnipeg to become Mennonite Central Committee U.S. workers at the Hindman Settlement School's Learning Center. The center helped more than 50 students obtain GEDs in 1993.

While efforts are under way across the United States to improve the quality of education, eastern Kentucky continues to be stung by extraordinarily high levels of school dropouts and illiteracy.

The region's school dropout rates are among the nation's highest. In Knott County, where Lovins lives, more than 35 percent of adults have less than a ninth-grade education. In nearby Owsley County more than half the adult population has less than a ninth-grade education.

Poverty and social distress are primary causes of the high dropout rate. Knott County is one of the state's 10 poorest counties, with an unemployment rate of over 11 percent and with nearly 50 percent of people under 18 living in poverty. Per capita income for most of Appalachian Kentucky remains below $10,000 U.S./ $13,333 Cdn.

"I know a fellow can't find a job with no schooling," says Lovins. Lovins dropped out of school after the sixth grade. "When I was young I thought I got smarter than the teachers," he says, shaking his head. At the time, dropping out seemed the right thing to do.

Since then Lovins has worked "dirt jobs," he says. "Everything from stacking lumber to planting grass seed at strip mine reclamation sites." Now he hopes for something more. *Mark Beach*

Hitting the books: *Bernie Baergen tutors Bobby Lovins.*

Mark Beach (MCC)

The 46-year-old Pentecostal Fellowship of North America, an all-white association of Pentecostal denominations, recently unanimously voted to disband and have its members join a new, multiracial Pentecostal umbrella group. The voice vote followed an hours-long, closed-door session at which both white and African-American Pentecostals talked about their past racial divisions and expressed repentance. The new organization will be called the Pentecostal Churches of North America. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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"Restoring Our Sight,"a conference for people seeking to challenge racism in the Anabaptist community, will be held March 3-5. The conference, to take place at the International Conference Center in Chicago, is sponsored by the Anabaptist Anti-Racism Educators and Organizers Network, a coalition of people connected to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. Registrations must be made by Jan. 31. Contact the MCC U.S. Racism Project, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; phone (717) 859-3889; fax (717) 859-3875.

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Twenty-seven New Testament scholars affiliated with the controversial Jesus Seminar have unanimously concluded that Mary had sexual relations before she became pregnant with Jesus. The conclusion is part of a series of pronouncements from the California-based organization of 70 to 80 Protestant and Roman Catholic academics that has attracted prominent New Testament scholars like Marcus Borg of Oregon State University and John Dominic Crossan from De Paul University. The academics disagreed on whether Joseph was Jesus' biological father and rejected notions that Jesus was the fruit of seduction or rape. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

Record

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On May 23, 1994, Protestants in Colombia officially acquired legal equality with Roman Catholics. The law guaranteeing religious liberty passed late in 1993, but was held up because of technical language problems. President Cesar Gaviria signed the final version into law. The law recognizes Protestant-performed marriages. Students may choose what religious instruction they will have in schools, rather than attending only Roman Catholic instruction classes. Protestant chaplains will be allowed into the country's military, police force, jails, prisons and hospitals.

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A judge has ordered a federal prison near Denver to allow a self-proclaimed satanist inmate to perform satanic rituals at the prison. In what's considered the first ruling of its kind, the prison may have to provide the inmate with a black robe, incense, a gong or bell and other items for use in his religious rituals. The judge based his 23-page decision on First Amendment concerns. The rituals Robert James Howard Jr. wanted to perform did not include bloodletting or violent acts. Howard, 24, is serving a 10-year sentence for kidnapping and auto theft. He sued prison authorities in 1992. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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The Vatican's doctrinal congregation, in what is viewed as a highly unusual move, has overruled the decision of another Vatican congregation and rescinded approval of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. The work is an inclusive-language translation overwhelmingly approved by the U.S. bishops more than three years ago. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith overturned a three-year-old decision by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments and said the NRSV is unsuitable for use in liturgical texts or for catechetical instruction. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

MINISTERS

Stan Bohn, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., will retire Aug. 31.

Albert H. Epp, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., was installed Nov. 6, 1994, as interim pastor at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb.

Consuela and **Val Krehbiel**, Faith Church, Montezuma, Kan., are leading a Spanish-language Bible study in Montezuma.

WORKERS

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

Barbara Burkholder and **Steffen Pauls**, Rouge Valley Church, Markham, Ont., and Toronto United Mennonite Church, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Viet Tri, Vietnam, teaching English at Vinh Phu Continuing Education Center.

Linford Martin and **Marcy Zimmerman**, West Philadelphia Fellowship, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Tlapa, Mexico. Linford will work in appropriate technology and Marcy in physiotherapy.

Colleen Zehr, Riverdale Church, Millbank, Ont., is beginning a nine-month MCC Youth Discovery Team leadership term in Lusaka, Zambia.

Burkholder

Pauls

Zehr

DEATHS

Longtime mission worker dies at 97

North Newton, Kan. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)—Marie J. Regier Frantz Janzen, a General Conference missionary for 34 years, died Dec. 12. She was 97.

Janzen

She began her missionary career in China in 1926, serving until 1932. She returned to China in 1940, but her work was interrupted by the war. The Japanese first held her under house arrest, then placed her in a prison camp for more than two years.

She served in China until 1949, when the Communist government barred missionaries from China. She then worked in Paraguay (1950-53), Taiwan (1955-62) and Chicago (1963-67).

She returned to the Newton, Kan., area after her retirement. In 1969 she married Peter Frantz. He died in 1973. In 1976 she married B.H. Janzen of North Newton, who survives.

Two sisters also survive, Minna Regier of Evanston, Ill., and Margaret Regier of North Newton. She was preceded in death by two brothers, Alfred and Hans.

Bluffton College announces a tenure-track position as **assistant/associate professor of computer science** beginning fall 1995. Applicants should possess a Ph.D. or M.S. in computer science; those with completed Ph.D. will receive preferential screening, but M.S. applicants will also be considered. The computer science major at Bluffton College is situated in the Science Department, and students follow a curriculum similar to the ACM guidelines for small colleges. Current requirements include strong physical science and mathematical components such as discrete math, calculus, numerical analysis, introductory physics and digital electronics. Applicants should feel comfortable teaching the usual computer science courses (computer programming, data structures, file processing, assembly language, computer architecture, operating systems and programming languages) from both a mathematical and physical perspective. By teaching the courses listed above (some on alternate years) the successful applicant will be teaching most of the courses in the computer science curriculum. Additionally, a liberal arts computer course exists.

Review of applications begins **Feb. 1**, until an appointment is made. Please submit letter of application, résumé or vita, three letters of reference and unofficial transcripts to **Donald L. Pannabecker, Ph.D., Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. Equal Opportunity Employer

Growing, energetic church in thriving southern Manitoba community is looking for a full-time, leading pastor. Starting date is negotiable.

Send résumés or inquiries to:
Pastoral Search Committee,
Emmanuel Mennonite Church,
960 Pembina Ave., Winkler, MB
R6W 1X4.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **assistant director in Personnel Department** (in Akron, Pa.). This three-year position is available March 20. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree; training in psychology, social work or education; interviewing experience, and MCC service experience. Writing skills, initiative and travel are necessary.

Interested people in the U.S. contact **Dwight McFadden, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151;** in Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381.** Applications **due Feb. 24.**

Eden Mennonite Church, Chilliwack, B.C., requires a full-time **senior pastor.** Applicant must have extensive pastoral experience and ability to lead a pastoral staff and congregation of 300 members. Emphasis on Anabaptist theology, strong preaching and teaching skills.

Apply **by Feb. 15** to **Frank Letkeman, C37-52324 Yale Road East, Rosedale, BC V0X 1X0; (604) 794-3723.**

Winter conferences for business professionals and entrepreneurs will be held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Feb. 3-4, 1995 and Phoenix March 16-20, 1995. The General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring events that include fellowship, learning, golf and food! You'll learn to know how others in business handle success and problems. Participants will share how a relationship with the church can help in business and how your leadership can enhance your church and conference.

Call or write **Gary Franz** for a brochure: **(316) 283-5100** or **General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347.**

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Reviews

BOOKS

FAITHFUL BUSINESS

Anabaptist/Mennonite Faith and Economics, *edited by Calvin Redekop, Victor A. Krahn and Samuel J. Steiner (University Press of America, 1994, 428 pages)*

Reviewed by Sally Weaver Sommer, Bluffton, Ohio

The editors of *Anabaptist/Mennonite Faith and Economics* attempt to fill a void of literature addressing the economic life of Mennonites. This void can perhaps be attributed to the bias against professions other than farming and the "helping professions" of many of us in the Mennonite community.

I believe this bias grows out of our refusal to recognize the common ambiguities found in all walks of life. I am now both a college professor and part owner of a small retail business in Bluffton, Ohio. Not too many years ago I would not have been able to visualize myself in these two roles. My change in attitude reflects a change throughout the Mennonite community that makes this book so timely.

The book is uplifting in holding up the challenge embedded in our heritage to live a life of discipleship and community, and depressing in pointing out how often we have fallen woefully short of this challenge. It tells stories from our past without glossing over the uglier moments in our history. My feeling of despair and repugnance while reading about our unfaithfulness was transformed to contemplation and challenge by the probing questions posed by the authors.

As an economist I found it refreshing to read economic theory written from an Anabaptist theological perspective. Some of the articles will likely find their way into my courses. My disappointment was that so few economists contributed to the book.

This book is written for those who are willing to wrestle with the ambiguities of faith and practice. The reader is poignantly reminded that we all need to "live by the grace of God." At the same time, the reader is made keenly aware that "God is able to raise up prophets in each generation, even for such a materialistic time as this."

THE TASK OF GRIEF

Andrew, You Died Too Soon *by Corinne Chilstrom (Augsburg, 1993, 140 pages)*

Reviewed by Wilma Loganbill, Newton, Kan.

Andrew, You Died Too Soon is a mother's story of her family's struggle with grief after an adopted son commits suicide. Chilstrom takes the reader with her as the family processes its loss.

She deals with her son's suicide, the way it happened and all the questions and feelings that followed because he chose to die.

I gained insight into some of the feelings adopted children have as they struggle with their identity and feelings of rejection because their birth mother gave them up.

I was interested in how the parents worked to preserve their marriage after their son's death and their promise always to be honest with one another about their feelings.

Chilstrom shares many of the questions they asked and what they found helpful. She shares things others did that added to her and her husband's hurt or comforted them as they struggled toward healing and wholeness again.

It is sometimes difficult to follow the sequence of what happened as the author tells about preparing for the funeral and the funeral itself. But it is a good story about how they struggled with the many details that needed attention.

I recommend this book to anyone who is struggling with grief and to anyone who wants to know how to help those who are grieving.

PRACTICAL BIBLE STUDY

Making Friends with the Bible *by Elouise Renich Fraser and Louis A. Kilgore (Herald Press, 1994, 167 pages)*

Reviewed by Gary F. Daught, Brandon, Man.

Making Friends with the Bible is about how we relate to the Bible. It hits so close to home that although I was tempted to say, "So and so really needs to read this one," the truth was that I really needed to read this one. The authors do not talk about what

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European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5-21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10-26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes
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other people do with the Bible. They take the risk to expose what they themselves do with the Bible. In their experience the Bible was often used as a weapon or a device of control. Consequently they admit to a tendency to hide from the Bible. We can hide by blaming the Bible for why we can't understand it, by idolizing the Bible when we remove it from its human context, by trying to protect the Bible from criticism and by distancing the Bible from our own lives. If the Bible is going to be a true friend, we have to come out of hiding.

The authors offer a seven-step process for becoming friends with the Bible. I usually get defensive around "step methods." But the authors disclaim slavish adherence. I would call their method a modified inductive approach. Bible study that matters cannot be done in isolation from the circumstances of daily living. A first step is to become aware of what is happening in our lives—including our feelings—before attempting to understand the text. Self-awareness allows the Bible to connect relevantly with our lives.

Further, they encourage us to accept our limitations of understanding, to ask honest questions of ourselves and the text, to meet together for group study and to expect God's presence.

Finally, the authors include examples of how they worked through the process. Their candor is refreshing and encouraging. I recommend this book for personal reading or group study.

OLD POLITICS MADE NEW

The Politics of Jesus: Behold the Man! Our Victorious Lamb *(second edition) by John Howard Yoder (Eerdmans, 1994, 257 pages)*

Reviewed by Daniel Liechty, Philadelphia

When John Howard Yoder first published *The Politics of Jesus* in 1972, it was hailed as "... the kind of book that appears once in an epoch, after which things are no longer the same." For a generation now, this book has been the most influential work written by a Mennonite theologian both inside and outside the Mennonite churches.

The basic theses of the book are these:

- Jesus Christ is the norm for Christian social ethics.
- Jesus was neither a socially naive rabbi whose teachings have no relevance to the modern world, nor are his social teachings neatly separate from his atoning work of salvation.
- Jesus taught a social and political ethic, not only a personal ethic.
- Jesus' social teachings were neither ignored nor supplemented by the apostolic or Pauline churches.

To put it mildly, these theses flew directly in the face of just about every major system of Christian social ethics, both Catholic and Protestant. Coming as it did right at the acme of the influence of Reinhold Niebuhr, most Christian social ethicists simply did not know what to make of this book. Initially panned or ignored, it has indeed in the end taken its place as an epochal work in the field.

The Politics of Jesus
John Howard Yoder

Perhaps the most important part of the book is the way that Yoder deals with the Pauline concept of "principalities and powers" (Colossians 1-2). Modern theologians tended to dismiss this as reflecting an outmoded cosmology peopled by angels and other sorts of supernatural beings. How could this be taken seriously by people who fly in jets and space rockets?

But Yoder, drawing especially on the work of H. Berkhof, painted quite a different picture. The principalities and powers represented a highly refined analysis of society and history. These powers represent social and political structures that hold society together under the sovereignty of God. But because they are "fallen" powers, rebelliously tainted by sin, these social and political structures always tend to ignore their place in God's order, seeking to become absolute.

The Christian social ethic, rooted in the redemption of Christ, who defeated the powers, is that of "revolutionary subordination." Far from blind obedience, the Christian community lives in accord with the laws and statutes of the state, but on its own terms. Christians remain morally "free agents." They live in terms of the kingdom of God, which Jesus initiated. They are always ready and willing to defy the laws when and where the state attempts to usurp the sovereignty of God. Furthermore, even as they live within the laws of the land, they engage among themselves in subverting the hierarchies of social power (patriarchy, racism, militarism, etc.) on which the authoritative claims of the state are based.

In its original edition, Yoder was modest as to his claims for the book. He claimed no originality—only that he was trying to get Christian social ethicists to look at what was becoming the consensus of New Testament scholarship.

The revised edition continues this minimalist approach. The revision consists of a few pages of epilogue following each chapter examining whether the thesis of that chapter has been accepted or refuted by the last two decades of New Testament studies. Each chapter and thesis has held up well. But as a reader, I want more. This is the most frustrating part of reading the revised edition. It is as if Frank Lloyd Wright were given an opportunity to comment on the revolutionary influence of his architecture, and all he wants to do is check to make sure the basements haven't leaked any water.

Resources

- **Racism: A Worship Resource Packet** includes sermon texts, stories, hymns, litanies and prayers. The packet, prepared by MCC Canada Peace and Social Concerns, is available free from any MCC Canada office.
- **Network** by Bruce Bugbee, Don Cousins and Bill Hybels (Zondervan, 1994, $154.99 U.S.) is a collection of videos, books and handouts to help church members discover their unique gifts and be matched to service in the church that's right for them.
- **In God's Name** by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (Jewish Lights Publishing, 1994, $16.95 hardcover) is a modern fable about the search for God's name, celebrating the diversity and the unity of all the people of the world.

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Editorial

Being there

When we encounter pain—in ourselves or in others—we often have no easy solutions. On many occasions, all we can offer another is our presence. We may not even have words, only our bodies, being there.

During a time in my life when I was depressed, no one had anything to say or do that would fix it. Yet my friends, my brothers and sisters in Christ, stood by me and experienced at least some of my pain with me. One friend said, "Since you cannot have faith right now that things will get better, I'll have faith for you."

This is the best kind of intercession. Tessa Bielecki writes in *Forefront* magazine about intercessory prayer: "Before we can exhort God, we must leap into the breach. We must put our bodies on the line and not merely mouth puerile petitions. Our whole being must be behind them. We must feel the hunger, the ravages of war, Aunt Sarah's anxiety before her surgery."

We need to believe in the power of our presence, the healing force that comes from simply being with others—or having others be with us.

Compassion means "feeling with." And often, in order to show compassion we need to *be* with others. Mother Teresa, who is criticized by some for not being as effective as she might be, nevertheless puts her body on the line. The work of her Sisters of Charity is one of being with the poor who are dying alone. These women take in people, care for them, offer what comfort they can, then help them die in the company of another.

The Book of Hebrews is written to a group of Christians that has endured persecution. The author encourages them to "meet together" and encourage one another (10:25). Being together is crucial for us to make it through hard times.

Matthew Fox has written that "there can be no compassion without celebration" because "what is of most [significance] in compassion is not feelings of pity but feelings of togetherness." Getting together to worship, to celebrate God's being with us, is perhaps the greatest aid to our healing. Some view a church's worship on Sunday as a refueling station for doing ministry, but it is much more. It is there that we confess together our need for God and our desire to be healed by God (in whatever way we need healing). Let us emphasize the word "together" as much as the word "confess."

Flowers: Jeanne, my wife, spent a few days in the hospital in early December. A number of people in my congregation brought us meals; others sent cards or flowers; some dropped by to visit. The meals were certainly helpful, but the love we felt from these brothers and sisters far surpassed the gifts of food they brought. I became aware again of the body of Christ and how when one member hurts, all hurt.

It is unfortunate that it often takes some kind of hurt to put us in touch with others, or even with ourselves. Experiencing pain has put me in closer touch with my own body, with how it works and what it needs. In that way, pain can be a way to help us grow, as Kathleen Kern says of depression (see pages 3-5). Such growth, however, is not easy and does not come quickly.

Much as we all want to find quick and easy solutions to our problems and to the problems of our friends and family members, we have to look elsewhere. We need to believe in the power of our presence, the healing force that comes from simply being with others—or having others be with us. Let us not neglect meeting together for worship, even if it feels mundane or routine. For such celebration together will help compassion to grow and flourish. And, Lord knows, this world needs a great infusion of compassion.
Gordon Houser

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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- Bread of Life meets physical and spiritual needs (see page 9)

PORTRAITS of refugees from Bosnia

Prologue

How many of you have read in newspapers or seen on television stories about the violent conflict in the former Yugoslavia and felt perplexed and repulsed? I have. And I've wondered, What can be done? How do I even pray for this situation?

One initial step is to learn to know some of the people there. Read the portraits by Emily Will of Cvijeta Tanic (page 4), the Mesics (page 4), Azra (page 6), Sefik Hairc (page 7) and Nada and Panta Zuk (page 8). Then pray for them and for their land, which is being destroyed by hatred.

Pray also for Jasmina Tosich and Bega Varga, who work for Bread of Life (page 9), an organization trying to help refugees and displaced people in the troubled land.

Cliff Kindy asks, What if we took peacemaking seriously? (page 10). Bernie Wiebe tells us how to practice nonviolent communication (page 11). And we profile Curt Goering (page 12), who works with Amnesty International to help free prisoners of conscience around the world.

Our news section often contains stories of good news. Read about Christian Peacemaker Teams helping a neighborhood close a crackhouse in Washington (page 13). Or read about how the presence and service of Mennonites helped an immigrant family in California turn around (page 14). *gh*

Next issue: Lydia and Jesse: a love story

Cover: Photo by Howard Zehr

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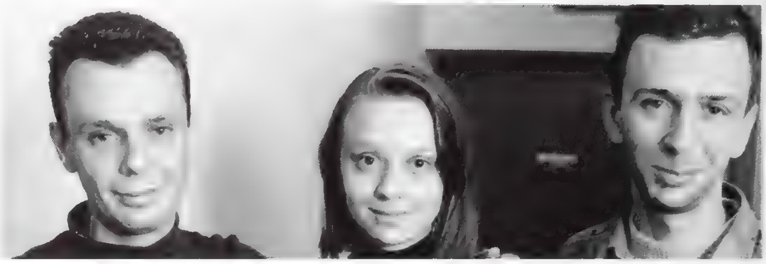

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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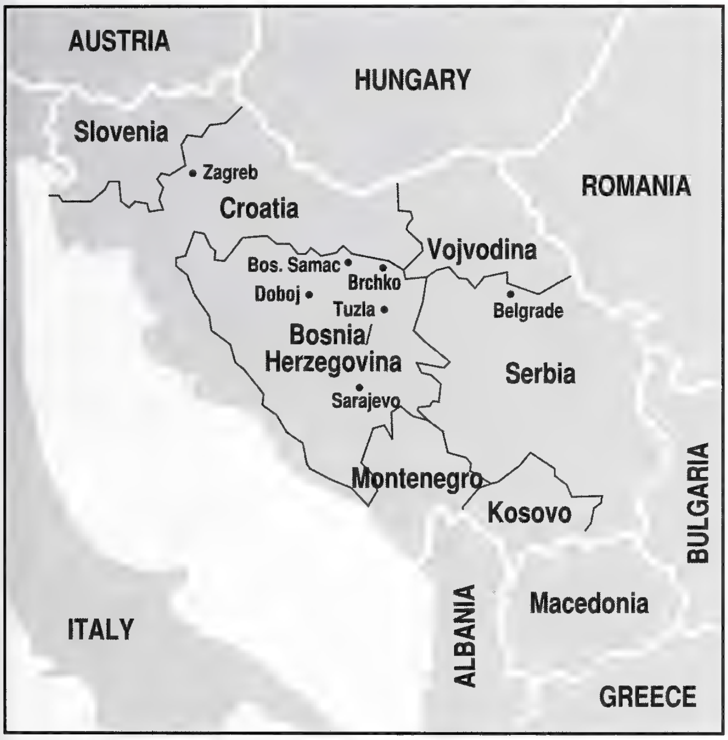
'We were friends before; we don't know what happened.'

After a visit to the former Yugoslavia, the author gains a new understanding of who the war victims are.

Emily Will



Last October I spent 10 days in the former Yugoslavia, mostly in Serbia but also a couple of days in Croatia, in order to learn about Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) work and partners there.

Perhaps because I had visited Croatia in 1992 and heard only from victims of Serb aggression, I, too, had fallen into the trap of "demonizing" the Serbs and thinking of them as a unified whole. Of course I never wrote this way for MCC news service because my job is to report the viewpoints of MCC Europe director Hansulrich Gerber and others in the field. But I must admit I never quite embraced these spokespersons' persistent moderation.

That has changed. This visit I also met Serb war victims. I learned all Serbs do not think or act alike. Some have opposed the madness from the outset and have suffered the same fate as other refugees—loss of home, profession, income, identity. Others lived alongside Muslims in Muslim neighborhoods and endured with them months, even years, of shelling by other Serbs.

Over and over, Serb, Muslim and Croat refugees echo the same refrain: "We were friends before; we don't know what happened." Most believe "some leaders somewhere" ignited old animosities for political ends they did not necessarily share.

I also wondered why Serbs in Serbia didn't do what the U.S. grass roots did during the Vietnam War—take to the streets in protest. The words of MCC worker Mark Jantzen began to sink in: Under communism, East Europeans were not "co-actors" with their governmental leaders; they were the "acted upon." Their attitude remains one of waiting for whatever governmental affliction will next befall them. Thus, for many Serbs in Serbia the idea that they bear personal responsibility for the current tragedy is a foreign one.

My hope is that these stories will also help you view the Balkan war victims as individuals, notwithstanding the "Croat," "Muslim" or "Serb" labels they must now wear.

Emily Will works for MCC's communications department.

PORTRAITS of refugees from Bosnia

Emily Will wrotes these portraits. Howard Zehr took the photos.

Cvijeta Tanic: 'Our first goal is to survive.'

Cvijeta Tanic is a Bosnian Serb who lived in Tuzla, Bosnia, before the war. A physician, she went to Belgrade, Serbia, in August 1991 to work on a specialization in lung disease, leaving her children, then 8 and 10, with her mother. Eight months later, as the conflict began heating up, Cvijeta returned for her children and mother.

"I'm completely against war," Cvijeta says with conviction. "Just seeing people arming was reason enough to get out."

Now, as a refugee, Cvijeta cannot legally work in Serbia, although she does volunteer at a Belgrade hospital. To earn money she makes barrettes, brooches and velvet hair bows to sell to friends or on the street.

"Our first goal is to survive," this dignified woman says firmly, refusing to dwell on the jolt of having gone from being a well-to-do professional to being a refugee forced to sell trinkets, uncertain whether her family will have enough to eat tomorrow.

Cvijeta, her children and parents live in a small apartment with a communal bathroom.

"We had a very good life in Tuzla. Now even my shoes and blouse are from friends. It's very difficult to have everything and then suddenly have nothing," she says.

Her father has had severe medical problems in the past couple of years, problems Cvijeta attributes to stress. Not only has he lost everything but he's also seen his three children, all professionals, lose everything.

Cvijeta has applied to immigrate to Canada. "My biggest hope is to go someplace where we can live a normal life," she says. She wants educational opportunities for her children and a chance for her son to develop his violin talent.

Cvijeta is among the many urban, educated professionals who have fled war-torn Bosnia, resisting the ultra-nationalism that fuels it and disgusted by the intolerance, fanaticism and paranoia reigning among their own ethnic group.

Professionals' contributions to Bosnian society will be sorely missed after the war. Ironically, with them they take their moderating political views, leaving behind the nationalist hardliners and diminished prospects for getting the war under control, points out Erich Weingartner, who studied the Bosnian situation for the World Council of Churches.

The Mesics: 'It was pure chaos.'

Ajdin Mesic, 26, Hanadi Mesic, 20, and Ajda Mesic, 17, lived in the Bosnian town of Bosanski Samac, working at their father's butcher shop and studying.

The town was 70 percent Muslim, 15 percent Serb and 15 percent Croat but, they say, none of the young people had any idea who was what. When the conflict flared, it was the older people who told the younger ones who was Muslim, who was Serb and who was Croat. Thus the Mesics, who are Muslim, think their parents' and grandparents' generations must shoulder responsibility for the current Bosnian nightmare.

Observers say the tragedy of this war is that it reignited old hatreds at a time when a generation that had grown up without firsthand experiences of the bitter past was coming of age.

At first paramilitary troops of all three factions operated in Bosanski Samac—cutting electric lines, bombing homes and in general sowing fear and distrust. Gangs were so numerous that townspeople joked that every street had its own paramilitary, Ajdin says.

Early in April 1992, the Mesics' father was shot and wounded by Muslim militia while on an errand in the center of town with two friends—one Serb and one Muslim.

Two weeks later, tanks overran the

How many refugees?

There are a total of 3,725,000 refugees and displaced persons in former Yugoslavia. The breakdown is as follows: 2,724,000 in Bosnia; 380,000 in Croatia, plus an additional 127,000 in the Serb parts of Croatia; 15,000 in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia; 30,000 in Slovenia, and 449,000 in Serbia and Montenegro.

Source: November 1994 issue of "Information Notes on Former Yugoslavia," published by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees and the Office of the Special Envoy for former Yugoslavia

Cvijeta Tanic

"I'm completely against war. Just seeing people arming was reason enough to get out."
Cvijeta Tanic

Their father died "in the presence of us all, in the oldest son's arms," the Mesics say. After that, the family broke down emotionally.

town, firing shells that exploded everywhere. "We didn't even know which army it was; it was pure chaos," Ajdin says.

A month later, the three young people and their mother set out by car for Serbia. Their father, still hospitalized in Tuzla, eventually joined them in Serbia.

The trip was fraught with danger. They lost count of the checkpoints they had to cross. Ten kilometers (6 miles) of their flight was over a road demarcating Croat forces on one side and Serb on the other. They were waved through the checkpoint in the Serb-held town of Brchko. Later, on television, they heard that either that day or the next, a large massacre of Muslims had taken place there.

"We're the only Muslim family we know of who got out through Serb-held Brchko," they say.

Their father died of a stroke later that year. "He died in the presence of us all, in the oldest son's arms," they say. After his death, the family broke down emotionally. The mother contemplated suicide.

Fortunately, they heard of the Christian outreach Bread of Life at this time, and received help and support from its two staff members and from volunteers. They began to relax and to believe that others cared about them. They also met other refugees—people in situations similar to theirs—and felt less alone.

The Mesics lost a house, an apartment, a farm and a business in Bosnia. They now live in a dark, dank garage. But what they lament most is the loss—or worse, the betrayal—of people they considered friends.

"Because they accept people with a whole heart, broken relationships hurt them deeply," says Bread of Life staff member Jasmina Tosic.

Betrayed by elders: *Ajdin (left), Ajda and Hanadi Mesic*

PORTRAITS of refugees from Bosnia

Azra: 'My most beautiful dream'

Thirteen-year-old Azra has been living in a barracks with 41 other refugees in Zagreb, Croatia, for the past 14 months. All are Muslims from Bosnia's Doboj area, so they call the barracks "Mali Doboj" ("Little Doboj"). Most want to return to Doboj and hope some of the territory, now occupied by Bosnian Serbs, will be returned to them.

Azra lives with her mother and her 10-year-old sister, Amela. Their father was captured in Doboj, and they have no news of him. The two girls attend a local school in Zagreb.

Azra wrote a story titled "My Most Beautiful Dream" for a newsletter published by the Doboj refugees:

"I was walking down a street full of people and I arrived home to Mother and Father, who were waiting for me. Amela was reading a book. I spent a long time looking over all the things I hadn't seen in a such a long time. I went into my room and played with my dolls. Night came. I put on my pj's and kissed Mom and Dad good night. I heard the bus coming from afar and opened my eyes to see Mother waking me so I wouldn't be late for school."

Azra's most beautiful dream is simply the normal life of any child anywhere. "It was very hard for me when I left Doboj forever," she says.

Azra

Azra's most beautiful dream is simply the normal life of any child anywhere.

Sefik Hairc: 'I had a lot of Serb friends'

Sefik Hairc, 58, worked in Doboj for 35 years as a metalworker. When the war broke out, the thousand or so men in the area had no means of defending themselves and their families, so they all left.

Sefik now lives in the Little Doboj barracks in Zagreb, Croatia, with his wife, a daughter-in-law, three grandchildren, and some 40 other refugees.

In Doboj, Sefik had built his own home and one for his son on the same piece of property. He worked hard at his job but was also aware of others' needs, he says, pulling from his wallet a dog-eared card listing the times he had donated blood.

"I was always sympathetic to people needing help, but I never thought I would need to receive humanitarian help," he says, as if he still can't quite believe what has happened to his life.

"If someone had told me three months before the war that it was going to happen, I would have thought they were crazy," Sefik says. He and other refugees are as perplexed as the rest of the world as to what catapulted his country into such animosity in so short a time.

"I had a lot of Serb friends. I hope some of them will still be my friends," he says.

> *"I was always sympathetic to people needing help, but I never thought I would need to receive humanitarian help."*
>
> **Sefik Hairc**

Sefik Hairc

Nada and Panta Zuk: 'We had a good life.'

Despite living in a tiny rat-hole of an apartment in Belgrade, Serbia, Nada and Panta Zuk have retained a sense of humor, even playfulness. They cannot fathom the senseless cruelty that they witness. A sniper shot Panta's aunt as she was hanging out laundry. "Imagine," Panta says, "someone sighting an old woman down the barrel of a rifle and then pulling the trigger."

They are from Sarajevo, Bosnia, where Panta operated a home construction business. He owned a truck and all the tools, equipment and machinery needed to build homes. "We had a good life. We were able to travel around Europe. We had a nice car," they say.

Although wealthy, they chose not to live extravagantly. They worked hard and wanted their daughters—now ages 22, 18 and 8—to learn the value of hard work. Now, they say, they're glad they did not live too luxuriously because it has made the transition a bit easier.

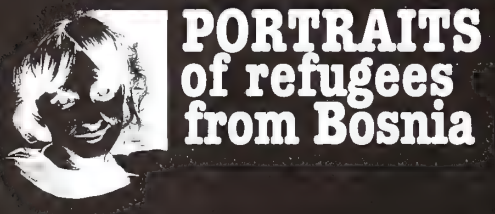
They have photos of their home—after it had been hit by a shell and then as it was going up in flames. They lived near Sarajevo airport, a prime target.

Leaving Sarajevo in May 1992, Nada crammed the car with valuables and other possessions. Arriving in Belgrade, she stopped to visit a relative. As they were drinking coffee, she heard a car drive off. It sounded like theirs; it was theirs! Nada was left with the clothes she was wearing and whatever cash she had in her purse.

The apartment they now live in had been condemned by city officials. Nevertheless, they may be kicked out at any moment because the economy is improving and apartments are much in demand, especially with some quarter million refugees in the city.

Snjezana, the couple's oldest daughter, recently was able to immigrate to Kitchener, Ont. She is an artist. One of her paintings, hanging in Bread of Life's office, is of a burned-down candle and an open box, symbolizing her feelings as a refugee. Nada says Snjezana would often awaken in the middle of the night and get up and paint. She envied her this outlet for her feelings.

Under "nationality" on Snjezana's passport, officials wrote, "No nationality." That represents how the Zuks feel now—without a home, without a country.



Under "nationality" on their daughter's passport, officials wrote, "No nationality." That represents how the Zuks feel now—without a home, without a country.

Without a country: *Nada and Panta Zuk with their daughter's painting*

Bread of Life meets physical and spiritual needs

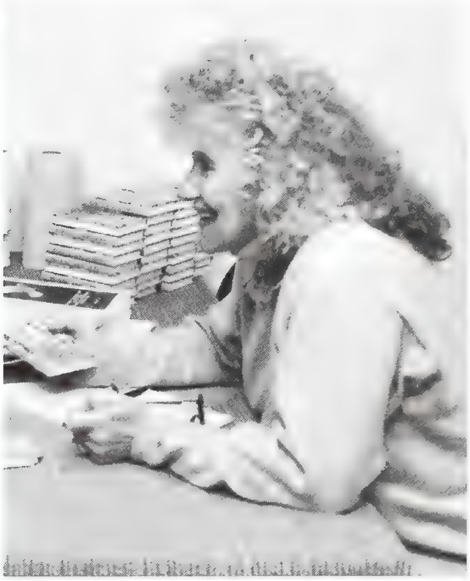
Pastor Slobodan "Boban" Andjelich baptizes a woman on Oct. 16, 1994, at Temple of the Holy Trinity, Belgrade's Pentecostal congregation. Three of the 12 people baptized that day were refugees who received assistance from Bread of Life, an MCC partner agency housed in the Temple of the Holy Trinity building.

Jasmina Tosich is on staff with Bread of Life.

What it feels like to be a refugee

Mennonite
agree
disagree?

Panta Zuk looks through a copy of *The Mennonite* that Emily Will gave him. He came upon a photo of refugees fleeing Rwanda. He said that before the war came to Bosnia, he could not understand other refugees' sadness. He had hired a young Croatian refugee and was always trying to cheer the guy up—unsuccessfully. Now that he is a refugee he understands why the Croatian was not able to be happy. He said that people cannot understand what it feels like until they go through it.



Bega Varga is also on staff with Bread of Life, which works with refugees' physical and spiritual needs.

Letters

MARY'S LINEAGE

In Kenneth Gibble's article, "The God of Holy Reversal" (Dec. 13, 1994, issue, page 6), it is said of Jesus' mother Mary, "Surely one might have expected a woman of royal blood to have been chosen for such a role," (bearing the savior of the world).

However, it seems necessary to believe that Mary was indeed a descendant of David. Although the Scripture makes it clear that Mary's husband, Joseph, was a descendant of David, it also states that Mary was a virgin when Jesus was conceived. So either Mary was a "daughter of David," or else Jesus was an adopted son of David, and not a descendant of David "according to the flesh." *Jerry C. Stanaway, Elmhurst, Ill.*

MORE ABOUT MENNONITES

I am eager to learn about Mennonites. The little bit of material I've seen so far has really encouraged me to seek out more information.

I am a prisoner. If you could send me a free subscription to *The Mennonite*, any other magazine subscriptions, any literature or books, I would be very appreciative.

Also I would enjoy being able to write. If you could put my name in *The Mennonite* seeking a penpal, I'd appreciate it.

Thank you very much for your help. *Daniel May, Missouri Eastern Correctional Center, Pacific, Mo.*

Editor's note: *We have begun a subscription for Daniel May, using money from our prisoners' subscription fund. We accept and depend upon donations to this fund.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

Speaking out

What if ...?

What if we took peacemaking seriously?

Cliff Kindy

What if some of us who follow Jesus took his words about peacemaking seriously? What if congregations called peacemakers as willingly as nations register and draft warmakers? What if we had training for those who make peace as thorough as for those who make war? What if we prayed as fervently for peace as citizens pledge their support for war?

Let's let our imaginations run. Wouldn't it be nice to call all our members for peace and none for war, to spend all of our money for peace and none for war, to train only for peacemaking and not for warmaking?

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), a joint effort of the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church and the Church of the Brethren, has been involved with projects in Haiti, the Middle East and in dealing with violence here in North America. With enough personnel CPT could place 100 people in Haiti to monitor human rights.

In North America we may be able to utilize 500 people initially to accompany as a nonviolent presence those who are being stalked by spouses in domestic disputes or those who have been threatened by gangs. Twenty-five construction workers trained in nonviolent direct action would make a nice beginning in Gaza Strip for rebuilding the homes of Palestinian refugees—homes that have been destroyed as a collective punishment by Israeli Defense Forces.

What if for every 70 members of a congregation we called out one peacemaker per year? (Smaller congregations could band together to call one.) This peacemaker could be a Christian Peacemaker Corps (CPC) member who is on call to go to situations of conflict here or around the globe for a three-year period. We are calling people of all ages. With the membership of our three denominations about 350,000, we would have 5,000 at our initial level.

What if our finances matched the calls? Costs would be about $12,000 per year for a CPC member, $2,000 for a delegation person and $300 for one registrant to attend an action conference. That would mean a range of $5 to $175 per member per year to support the called-out person in one of these three ways. The average family in our three denominations spends $2,000 to $3,000 per year on just the war-related portion of their U.S. federal income tax, so we have some distance to go to even bring a balance.

Training is essential because we have to be open to the leading of the Spirit in situations of conflict and danger, and we have to learn the skills of peacemaking. CPC members have some of the best training available among any of the major international peacemaker groups, but it doesn't approach the level of basic training in the military. What if it did?

Zeal: We need spiritual undergirding by the people of God as we call individuals to go to places like Washington, Gaza Strip, Bosnia, Goshen, Sudan and Haiti. Prayer, letters, action support, fasting and awareness will be required to maintain the folks on the edge. The cost to these people may be the cross. We may add chapters to the *Martyrs Mirror*. How we interpret discipleship to Jesus may bring back the zeal and costliness of the early church and the Anabaptists.

Four to eight families could support a CPC member. We could support 12,000 to 20,000 CPC members from just our small groups. What if we took this task as seriously as we took our support of the Civilian Public Service efforts of earlier years?

Imagine the growth of CPT, mediation services and community conflict resolution programs. Imagine the new daring and vibrancy across our churches. What if one group of 70 started by calling out one CPC member? What if ... ?

Cliff Kindy is chair for Christian Peacemaker Teams and lives in North Manchester, Ind.

Compassionate communication

How to practice nonviolence in our conversations

Bernie Wiebe

There are fresh attempts being made to promote "compassionate" or "nonviolent" communication. It reminds us of alternatives that will communicate mercy, peace and grace. Through it you and I can become more effective, can nurture and affirm others even as we assert ourselves.

Marshall B. Rosenberg is one of the pioneers at the Center for Nonviolent Communication (3468 Meadowbrook Blvd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118; or Winkel 3, 4313 Mohlin, Switzerland).

Rosenberg bases his theory for nonviolent or compassionate communication on four basic steps:

1. Expressing honest observations: We too easily mix observation and evaluation. Instead of telling a friend, "When you give all your lunch money to others, I think you are too generous" (separating our observation from the evaluation), we say, "You are too generous" (Rosenberg, *A Model for Nonviolent Communication*, New Society Publishers, 1983). There is a significant difference, especially when the "mix" becomes judgmental: "You are stupid."

2. Expressing our feelings: Many of us have difficulty with feelings or emotions. We don't know how to demonstrate them well or how to put them into words. Consequently we tend to qualify or "muddy" them, e.g., "I feel you let me down."

Bernie Wiebe teaches conflict resolution at Menno Simons College in Winnipeg and serves as vice moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Rosenberg says, "I'm learning that I'm alienated from my feelings when I

- use the word 'feel' but follow with my thoughts rather than my feelings: 'I feel that I am right';
- use words that tell more what I think I am than how I feel: 'I feel inadequate';
- use words that tell more what I think others are doing to me than that reveal how I'm feeling: 'I feel misunderstood.'"

3. Expressing what we need or value: Much of our speaking is loaded with cultural associations. And our culture is dominated by violent, winner-loser assumptions. When I say, "You make me angry when you talk like that," I impose judgment on your speech. If I say, "When I hear you use that kind of language, I feel angry because I interpret that to be racist," then I am letting you know my values or needs. When we communicate from the foundations of our basic values and needs, the result will usually be connection. The door is left open for dialogue and understanding without violence.

4. Expressing our requests: It is common to assert ourselves with demands upon others: "I want some understanding." Rosenberg says, "Using positive action language in making requests increases the chance that our requests will be honored."

To get more comfortable, I need to tell you as specifically as I can what I perceive will make a difference for me: "I want to feel more comfortable, and I want you to tell me what makes you feel comfortable."

Mutual growth happens best when we share our vulnerabilities and our perceived resolution.

Summary: Nonviolent or compassionate communication is not the essence of relationships; it is a life-connected series of skills or tools that promote a process.

In a training workshop, a woman leader from Belgrade, Serbia, said, "I want a world where people are respected for the ease and strength of their melting, rather than from the strength of their walls."

The giraffe and the jackal

An element that has contributed much to the nonviolent communication program is the use of giraffe and jackal puppets.

The giraffe is known for having the largest heart of all land mammals. Its long neck symbolizes the ability to see consequences of behavior. It is known to live life strongly yet lives gently with other animals. It is a symbol of potential.

The jackal is a gregarious but wild animal. It is one that does another's dirty work. It likes to share in the spoil without sharing in the danger. A jackal is not what it appears to be. It symbolizes deception and negatives.

The jackal puppet leaves people without creative choices. It tends to emphasize all the shoulds, musts and ought-to's of our culture. It classifies people and sets up barriers to any compassionate communication.

The giraffe is used to demonstrate compassionate communication in a nonviolent manner—connecting feelings and needs to images and thoughts. This puppet tries to help me clearly express what I want, without demanding, imposing or judging the other. It tries to help the other person empathetically receive what could mutually enrich our relationship with concrete actions.

With both puppets come special sets of "ears." When the jackal's ears face inward, self-blame is going on; ears facing outward symbolize "other-blame." We tend to intellectualize our behavior.

When the giraffe's ears go inward, self-empowerment is felt; outward ears symbolize "other-empowerment." The interest is to get underneath the intellectualizing down to the foundation of our common needs and feelings. With giraffe ears we accept our feelings and let others deal with theirs.

Working for human rights

Curt Goering works with Amnesty International to help prisoners worldwide.

Rich Preheim

Curt Goering works in New York City, lives in northern New Jersey and maintains membership in his home church in Moundridge, Kan. But his heart goes out to the world:

- to Burundi, where one-third of the population has been displaced by a brutal civil war;
- to Afghanistan, where the number of residents in the capital city of Kabul has been cut in half due to that country's turmoil;
- to Angola, where the number of extrajudicial executions and "disappearances" of political opponents are on the rise.

"There are people who care, who see things happen and can't help but do something about them," Curt says.

He is one of those trying to do something. For more than a year he was the acting head of Amnesty International in the United States. He has now returned to his position as deputy director.

The United States is the largest of AI's 50-some country branches, with 375,000 members and a budget of $22.5 million.

Started in 1961, Amnesty International is a worldwide human-rights organization working to free prisoners of conscience, ensure fair trials for political prisoners, abolish the death penalty and torture of prisoners and end extrajudicial executions and disappearances.

The branches are responsible for mobilizing pressure—politicians, media, letter-writing campaigns—in their respective countries on behalf of prisoners identified by AI's research department.

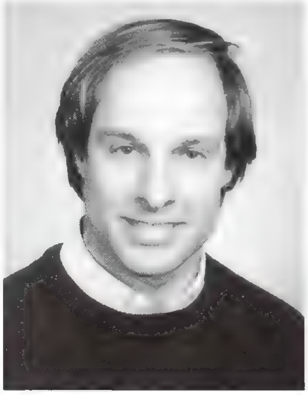
"The organization offers an avenue for something practical and concrete to alleviate pain and suffering," says Curt, who has been with AI since 1980.

Curt credits his Mennonite faith as central in determining his vocation. He is a native of Moundridge, Kan., where he is a member of Eden Mennonite Church. He is a graduate of Bethel College in North Newton, Kan.

"In the community at large—and at Bethel in particular—there was an emphasis on peace issues, social justice issues: individuals acting, working to try and make a difference," he says.

Curt first became exposed to the world's greater issues while doing alternative service with Mennonite Central Committee in West Berlin from 1972 to 1975. His assignment was working with physically disabled young men. But he experienced more.

"[I was] in the middle of an internationally political environment," he says, "barraged by totally different interpretations of the same events. I saw people seeing things through different lenses and other ways of interpreting various events."



"There is a growing movement of ordinary people ... to change things, and they are changing things."

Curt Goering

After his MCC assignment, he returned to Kansas and graduated from Bethel in 1978 with degrees in peace studies and German. He spent his last year of studies in the West Bank with MCC, where he became familiar with Amnesty International.

Curt started graduate school at Georgetown University in Washington in the fall of 1978. After getting his master's degree in Middle Eastern studies and wanting to work for a nongovernmental organization, he joined Amnesty International in Washington in 1980.

Since then he has served as regional specialist on Europe and the Middle East at AI's legislative office in Washington, served in the research office in London, been on various research assignments, most recently to refugee camps on the Iraq/Turkey border, and helped develop an AI branch in Mongolia. He has also been a member of U.S. delegations to four International Council Meetings, Amnesty International's highest decision-making body.

Clout: As U.S. acting executive director, Curt says, "[I was] able to see what can be done when you have the support of a large organization ... a movement that has a lot of credibility, a lot of clout."

The challenge, he says, is how best to use that clout. And there is a great need for it. Curt cites increases worldwide in political killings and disappearances. According to AI statistics, 110 countries—including the United States—have been documented as torturing prisoners.

But Curt is also optimistic. "There is a growing movement of ordinary people ... to change things, and they are changing things," he says.

When the world's government leaders meet, he says, human rights is almost always on the agenda. That has given human rights issues a higher priority, Curt says.

This, however, is only a beginning. At the end of November 1993, 4,337 AI volunteer groups were working on behalf of almost 12,000 individuals from 98 countries. But in 1992, 300,000 political prisoners were detained without charge or trial in more than 60 countries. Some 4,400 prisoners of conscience were held in 32 countries.

"There's so much more we should be doing," Curt says.

Rich Preheim is assistant editor of Mennonite Weekly Review. *Reprinted with permission*

CPT helps neighbors close crackhouse

Washington (CPT)—Residents of Washington's Columbia Heights community have toppled a crackhouse in their neighborhood. The victory is a culmination of the efforts of concerned neighbors in partnership with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT).

Neighborhood residents were no longer willing to tolerate the drug dealing, prostitution, noise and violence associated with the Girard Street property and launched a campaign to pressure the city into enforcing housing and safety codes. On Dec. 7, 1994, city agencies finally bricked up the house.

Members of the team charted crime statistics for the past two years in an eight-block area surrounding the house and found that more than 90 percent of all crimes reported there occurred near the house. This led to the decision to work to close the house.

CPT members worked together with community residents to overcome fear of drug dealers. They then confronted the sluggish regulatory bureaucracy, legal roadblocks and the owner of the property. To expedite the city's work, neighbors offered to store the possessions of the building's legal tenants while alternative housing was being arranged.

CPT members also taught classes for youth in nonviolent conflict resolution and joined neighborhood residents in locally initiated "Orange Hat" neighborhood street patrols.

CPT helped organize a candlelight vigil and march on Dec. 7 to celebrate the victory and invite other community members to join in the ongoing struggle to "take back" the neighborhood. Community leaders offered prayers of thanksgiving, and police officers applauded the accomplishments of the project.

The crackhouse closing is one of the more dramatic results of CPT's Violence Reduction Project in Washington. Since September 1994, CPT has worked with the Sojourners Neighborhood Center and community agencies to establish a violence-free zone in an eight-block area.

West Coast MCC asks compassion for immigrants

Akron, Pa.—Board members of West Coast Mennonite Central Committee, concerned by increasing anti-immigrant sentiment in that region, have passed a statement outlining "A Christian Response to Refugee and Immigrant Issues."

Some of the public discussion about Proposition 187 this past fall was "unchristian, dehumanizing, even hateful," says Stephen Penner, director of West Coast MCC.

'Californians increasingly feel things aren't working as well as they should. Budget deficits, overcrowded schools, deteriorating roads .... Some people target undocumented immigrants as one of the major reasons for these problems.'

Stephen Penner

Proposition 187, which passed in California by a 2-1 margin last November, stipulates that people suspected of being in the United States without proper documentation may not receive medical and educational services and must be returned to their native country. The legislation is now tied up in the courts.

"Californians increasingly feel things aren't working as well as they should, [citing] budget deficits, overcrowded schools, deteriorating roads. Some people target undocumented immigrants as one of the major reasons for these problems," Penner says.

The statement calls MCC's constitu-

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Saskatchewan farmer, ex-volunteer compares agriculture at home and abroad / p. 19

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., has announced a new scholarship program, the Church Leadership Award, which will assist students with gifts for church leadership. The program will provide a full-tuition scholarship. Beginning this fall, one award will be granted to a new student entering the Master of Divinity program. When fully implemented, the award will be available to eight students in any one school year. The AMBS board approved the Church Leadership Award program at last spring's meeting. AMBS is designating this as a memorial-giving opportunity honoring Marlin E. Miller, AMBS president, who died Nov. 3, 1994.

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U.S. congregations making their facilities and services more accessible to those with disabilities can receive financial assistance through a new fraternal benefit from Mennonite Mutual Aid. Matching funds of up to $2,000 are available through handicap accessibility grants available now. Examples of eligible expenses include construction of ramps, elevators, pew cuts, curb cuts, costs for modifying rest room facilities, purchase of listening devices, large-print resources, or other adaptive equipment. Grants are available to congregations who relate to MMA. Each congregation must have an MMA advocate, and projects should comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Grants are limited to one per congregation each year. Call the Advocacy and Educational Resources Department at MMA, 1-800-348-7468.

Argentina's Constitutional Assembly has decided not to end the government's special relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, according to the Reformed Ecumenical Council. Protestants had petitioned the assembly to take out Article 2 of the constitution, which states the country "sustains ... the Apostolic Roman Catholic Church." The Roman Catholic Church gets official privileges such as government tax subsidies. An estimated 3 to 7 percent of the Argentine population is Protestant. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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In a service of "confession and repentance," members of the Grace Lutheran Church in River Forest, Ill., formally denounced the anti-Semitic teachings of Martin Luther, founder of the Lutheran church. "For the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America to publicly repudiate the teachings of the man for whom the church is named takes extraordinary courage," said James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee. (*Messenger*)

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A representative of Mennonites in Cuba reported on the state of the church there at the Latin American Anabaptist Consultation at Cachipay, Colombia, in November 1994. Pastor Roberto Rodriguez said that while Cuban intellectuals have traditionally been agnostic, a religious awakening is happening on the island. He reported a generalized interest in owning and reading the Bible. He described churches filling with young people, some churches having tripled memberships in a short time, with new fellowships springing up. He also reported that the Evangelical Anabaptist-Mennonite Congregation of Cuba has 10 preaching outposts or house churches and are considering starting more. The group has 130 full members. It has organized a social work brigade that works in a school for mentally retarded children. The group is also planning its first summer camp for youth.

ency to look at the situation differently, he says, adding that on the West Coast increasing numbers of Mennonite church members are newcomers—Hmong, Indonesians and other Southeast Asians, Mexicans and Central Americans, and people from the former Soviet Union. In just the past couple of years, some 3,000 Russian and Ukrainian immigrants have joined Mennonite Brethren churches in California, Oregon and Washington.

The statement points out that "many of our grandparents and great-grandparents came to the United States" for the same reasons as do immigrants today—"for protection from religious or political persecution and in search of freedom, peace and opportunity for their families."

"Immigrants want to become economically self-sufficient and to make positive contributions to the land where they are living. As the children of immigrants, we should welcome these new arrivals with Christian care and compassion," says the statement, adopted in September 1994.

Active support: West Coast MCC staffperson Mary Elizondo has been giving time and energy to immigrant issues for the past two years. In addition to an ongoing grocery sharing project, she has begun work at parenting education.

Elizondo is developing a team trained in parenting education to present workshops to West Coast churches. The workshops seek to help newcomers discern what parenting methods to adopt from U.S. culture and what to keep from their own, Penner says.

"For the Russian and Ukrainian communities especially, the change is drastic. They come from places where they were told what to do to a place where they have to find their own future. The children adapt, but the parents don't. The Hmong people and Mexicans also feel a loss of control over their children," Elizondo says.

Elizondo and her advisory committee are also investigating opening a shelter for immigrant workers in a rural area where jobs are plentiful but housing is not. The board also compiled a list of 19 practical steps individuals and congregations can take to express the spirit of Christ toward immigrants and refugees (See the box on the next page). *Emily Will*

How a small gift can grow

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Just a little caring can multiply and bear fruit even several years later, says Mary Elizondo, who works with refugee and immigrant issues with West Coast Mennonite Central Committee.

Maricela Bejar

When a winter freeze hit California in 1990, Mennonite Disaster Service donated funds to help Elizondo's program buy groceries for affected families, including the Wenceslado and Saloma Bejar family.

Touched by the gesture, Saloma began attending Orange Cove (Calif.) Mennonite Brethren Church with her younger children. Later Wenceslado began attending and later still, the couple's teenage children—a son, Angel, involved in gangs, and a daughter, Maricela—also came to the church. They all eventually accepted Christ.

When Elizondo read materials about MCC's Summer Service program, she recognized an opportunity for Maricela to develop her leadership skills and also work toward a dream of attending college.

As part of the 1994 Summer Service program, Maricela worked with the church's Kids' Club while earning money for college tuition. She has recently completed her first semester at King's River Community College in Reedley, Calif.

"Maricela's parents are from a rural area of Mexico. Her mother and father can read just a little Spanish. It's really a huge step for the children of farm workers to be able to attend college," says Elizondo.

Angel "has really cleaned up his act," Elizondo says. He worked in the fields last summer to save for college, which he, too, now attends. "He wants to go into corrections," she says. *Emily Will*

How to welcome a stranger

From a list compiled by West Coast MCC

1. Learn to know immigrants and refugees by name.
2. Avoid thinking and saying "we" and "they."
3. Attend a church service of an ethnic group different from your own.
4. Try to learn another language.
5. Avoid generalizing when talking about another ethnic group.
6. In church, try to learn songs from another ethnic group or read Scripture in another language.
7. Invite a guest speaker from a refugee or immigrant group, with a translator if needed.
8. Plan joint meals, where people from various ethnic groups gather together to eat.
9. See the movie *El Norte* (especially suggested for youth groups).
10. Sponsor a refugee or a refugee family.
11. Plan a joint youth groupactivity.
12. Volunteer for a local agency that works with refugees and immigrants.
13. Learn your own family stories and history. Find out why and when your family immigrated. Write these stories for the next generation.
14. Write your elected representatives about legislation that affects refugees and immigrants.
15. Learn to know one refugee or immigrant.
16. Support efforts to build more just societies in other countries.
17. Volunteer to provide transportation to church or the doctor for a refugee or immigrant.
18. As a Sunday school project, hold a grocery shower, baby shower or household shower for a new immigrant or refugee.
19. Host exchange students.

Mission heads anxious about home front

Chicago (Meetinghouse)—"We are hanging on—by our fingernails."

That's what personnel from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission agencies told each other here Dec. 11-15, 1994, at the annual meeting of the Council of International Ministries (CIM).

Having focused on the world and the church in previous meetings, this year CIM turned its attention to itself with the theme: "The Health of the North American Mission Enterprise."

"What are the signs of health and struggle in your agency?" they asked each other.

Jack McClane of Brethren in Christ Missions, Grantham, Pa., was the first to use the fingernail imagery. His report told of declining financial support, which has meant a decrease in the number of missionaries sponsored by his agency.

Others picked up the theme. The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference reported a decrease in overseas staff from 133 in 1989 to 69 in 1993. COM's current count is 77. In one year, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), Elkhart, Ind., saw a decline from 127 in 1989 to 108 in 1990. They currently report 103.

Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM), Salunga, Pa., reported a 15 percent budget cut in the last fiscal year.

Mennonite Brethren Missions/Service (MBM/S), Fresno, Calif., had a surplus of $600,000 in 1990; it will have a deficit of almost that much in 1994. Once projecting 200 overseas workers by 1995, it has had to cut from 125 to the current 84.

Len Sawatsky of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, Winnipeg, characterized his agency as "going right down to the tip of the fingernail." The number of missionaries EMMC has been able to place overseas has been cut in half in the past nine years.

For only one group have the past years been better than hanging on: the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Steinbach, Man. Henry Klassen reported an increase of $300,000 in overall funding, mainly through the use of special projects. The number of missionaries with EMC has also

Fr. Frank Cordaro, 43, associate pastor of St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Council Bluffs, Iowa, was sentenced to six months in prison last Oct. 20 for trespassing at Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Neb. He said he wanted to draw attention to the war-making capabilities of the base and to practice his religion. "As I see it, the faith communities of the Omaha-Council Bluffs area have abdicated their responsibility to stand opposed to this evil," he says. "In the first two centuries, the Christians were absolutely pacifist. We need to reclaim this nonviolent tradition and spirit." (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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The annual meetings of Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S. board members will be held in Fresno, Calif., Feb. 16-18. On Feb. 15 there will be a gathering of area youth at Butler Mennonite Brethren Church. A public meeting will be held Feb. 17 at 7:30 p.m. at Fresno Pacific College Special Events Center. Business sessions are also open to the public and will be held at Bethany Mennonite Brethren Church.

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Walter Sawatsky had a chance to assess the state of the church in Russia firsthand last summer. Sawatsky, who teaches at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., spent last summer in Moscow studying church and religion. Sawatsky noted that churches under the former Soviet Union functioned well, partly because of finances from overseas religious institutions. "[Now] those churches have almost completely stopped functioning because they lack money. ... the Baptists, the Pentecostals and the Orthodox were dependent on foreign aid," he says. The volume of North American money has increased from the Soviet years, but "all the money is dissipated into many short-term, unrelated projects," he says. "However, there are many fine people who are modeling Christ in unmistakable terms, but at this point we just don't know their story."

A Chicago bank found a new way to invest in its community. *The Neighborhood Works* reports on a program of Lincoln Park Savings in Chicago designed to bolster the local economy. When customers open accounts at the bank, they receive vouchers called "local dollars" that can be used like cash at businesses within a two-mile radius of the bank. Merchants can return them to the bank for cash. A bank executive told the magazine, "We can't look to Washington. We can't look downtown. We need to build with each other." (*Salt*)

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Five urban churches have received grants totaling $25,000 through the new Urban Initiative Fund sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid. Immanuel Mennonite Church, Bayside, N.Y., received $7,500 to support an urban ministry director. College Hill Mennonite Church in Land O'Lakes, Fla., received $2,500 for a used van, which will transport people to programs. Calvary Mennonite Church, Los Angeles, received $6,000 to support a Youth and Family Services Program. Burnside Mennonite Church, Bronx, N.Y., received $3,500 to support its Charisma Youth Development Project. Westside Church of the Living Word, Buffalo, N.Y., received $5,500 to support Project Families, which includes a monthly home visitation program and a mother's club.

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Tayyibah Amatullah, a Muslim woman in Minneapolis, was recently ticketed by St. Paul police in a downtown mall for wearing her veil, reported Religious News Service. A Minnesota law makes it a misdemeanor to wear a "disguise" in a public enclosure. The police said Amatullah looked "bizarre" and feared she might be a shoplifter. Muslim activists said the incident was an infringement of their religious rights and is typical of ignorance of Islam in the United States. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

Where to find cash

Chicago (Meetinghouse)—"The well is not dry," Harry Olfert told the Dec. 11-15, 1994, gathering of the Council of International Ministries (CIM). Olfert, formerly with Mennonite Brethren Missions/Service (MBM/S), now runs a fund-raising consulting service out of Winnipeg.

Olfert challenged CIM agencies to get beyond thinking that money coming from congregations and conferences is somehow better than that from individuals.

This kind of thinking leads agencies to work at getting more support from congregations than from individuals. "But that's wishful thinking," he said.

He gave an example from his days with MBM/S. The agency had received more than $370,000 from one Canadian province, a third of which came from one congregation of 200 members. Further inquiry showed that six families had contributed most of the $100,000.

"Are our missions supported by churches or by individuals?" Olfert asked.

Olfert challenged CIM agencies to use a variety of methods in raising their funds—and to value contributions from whatever source.

"If we want the well to continue to flow and increase its flow, it probably will not be either working through the church or through individuals—but through both," Olfert said. *J. Lorne Peachey*

remained constant, though many are "seconded" to work with independent mission agencies.

Why the decline? For some CIM members, the answer for lessening mission support can be found in a new generation of Mennonites, a generation that has not caught the mission vision of a previous one. "There's a disconnectedness of baby boomers and post-baby boomers with the mission enterprise," said Stanley Green, president of MBM.

Others charged that the individualism and affluency of Western culture has diverted the church from its primary task. "Church members have changed from stewards into consumers," said Sylvia Ronsvalle of the Empty Tomb, Inc., a resource leader for the CIM gathering.

Ronsvalle would shift the focus of the crisis away from the agencies to the constituency. "Mission agencies are just products of their constituencies," she said.

"We have not developed a sound Western theology of money ... . We cannot even discuss our finances with people in the church. The area of stewardship, if it is touched at all in our seminaries, is generally seen as a necessary evil."

When challenged that stewardship is more than money, she replied, "But [money] is a North American sin we need to deal with. If we let one little crack in the door and say our problem isn't money, everyone will stream out that crack."

Cosmetic changes: Hugo Zorrilla, a member of the MBM/S board and a professor at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College, called for major changes in Mennonite mission strategy. A former pastor in Colombia, Puerto Rico and Spain, Zorrilla placed particular emphasis on missionary training.

"Many missionaries have never evangelized in their cultures, and now they want to plant churches in other cultures—often in the worst Western manner," he said.

"We have not found a Mennonite way of doing mission," Zorrilla went on. "Yes, there have been changes, but these have been only cosmetic."

After 2 1/2 days of lectures and discussion, CIM members agreed that the church needs a new vision for mission. They also agreed a first priority for this vision must be to capture the imagination of youth.

That agreement came after three young adults challenged CIM to develop this mission vision for the church. "Give us a new vision that will inspire our generation like the Anabaptist Vision did a previous one," they said.

In a closing session, two recently appointed mission board presidents—Richard Showalter for EMM and Stanley Green for MBM—spoke of their visions for mission for the future.

Showalter said he finds his in the fact that between 3,000 and 4,000 "people groups" in the world have not yet received the gospel. "There are many people ... who have never met a

Christian, whether through a cup of cold water or through a witnessing community," he said.

Green called for the church to recover a sense of identity in mission. Early Anabaptism was primarily a mission movement, he said. "I believe God is calling Mennonites to share a message of peace with the world … good news rooted in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Signs of health: CIM agency personnel told each other not only of their struggles. They also gave signs of hope.

One was the partnerships for mission work many of them have developed—with each other and with churches around the world. Several also cited grass-roots interest in mission, including congregations that come to their agencies asking for help in sending missionaries to different locations around the world. *J. Lorne Peachey*

Business leaders discuss 'Sunday-Monday gap'

Winnipeg (MEDA)—Christians need to "break down the wall of dualism" that separates the life of faith from the life of work, says former steel executive Bill Diehl. That wall "must be

continued on next page

'Grief Lady' brings hope to loved ones' survivors

Home-grown: *Barbara Martin with her granddaughter, Khadija*

Earl Martin (MCC)

New Orleans (MCC)—Barbara Martin, a local voluntary service worker for Mennonite Central Committee here, directs a program called Survive. She follows obituaries in the local newspaper and invites families whose loved ones have been killed to gather with others who have also walked that road.

"They call me the Grief Lady," Martin says. "We give survivors opportunity to act out their anger, put a chair in front of them sometimes and allow them to yell at the chair, or to pound a pillow."

Since Martin began directing Survive in January 1994, she has tried to involve local churches. And she helps survivors draw from their spiritual wells. "Most of the survivors feel that God will help them deal with [the grief]," Martin says.

Martin grew up in Louisiana and has lived 26 years in New Orleans' St. Thomas Housing Development, a community of approximately 4,000 that has known more than its share of violence. Last year alone, 27 residents of St. Thomas were slain. Barbara raised three children here and now dotes on her granddaughter.

She also expresses her concern. "Our younger generation, if they reach the age of 21, they're lucky," she says. *Earl Martin*

Wataru Tsurumi's *The Complete Guide to Suicide* is a best-seller in Japan, the nation of ceremonial suicide, where some 22,000 people killed themselves last year. In the do-it-yourself book, Tsurumi offers instructions on 10 ways of committing suicide, explaining the discomfort of each approach and the possible ways of failing. The guide then rates the methods: Jumping in front of a train merits a mere "one skull," finding the perfect spot to freeze to death wins "five skulls." Around Mount Fuji, where 39 corpses were found in 1994, five corpses had copies of the book nearby. (*World Press Review*)

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The Vatican and the Palestine Liberation Organization announced Oct. 25, 1994, that they have established a "permanent and official" relationship. The PLO will open an office of representation to the Vatican at a location yet unnamed. The Vatican's emissary in Tunisia will handle contacts with the PLO in the Middle East. The agreement gives "a permanent and official character to working contacts that have existed for many years," said Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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The leaders of seven Anabaptist groups, meeting in Chicago in December 1994, endorsed a statement decrying violence in North America. The Council of Moderators and Secretaries includes leaders from the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church, Brethren in Christ, Mennonite Brethren, Evangelical Mennonite Church, Church of the Brethren and Conference of Mennonites in Canada. The statement says, in part, "Out of devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ we cry out against the violence of our time. We encourage our congregations and agencies to work with other Christians to find dramatic and effective ways to witness to the peace and reconciliation offered through Jesus Christ." (*Gospel Herald*)

A panel of nine international religious leaders and lawyers has recommended that the United Nations monitor the U.S. government to ensure that it respects international human rights standards. The panel, which included Aaron Tolen, a World Council of Churches president from Cameroon, and representatives from eight other countries, visited seven cities, meeting with 50 to 75 people at each of seven group hearings. The team reported "widespread evidence of gross and consistent patterns of racism throughout the fabric of society. ... Many of the acts of racism testified to in our hearings constitute apparent violations of fundamental human rights as set out in international law." (*Messenger*)

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Two Mennonite agencies are working to relieve flood victims in Djibouti. A cyclone followed by torrential rain deluged the normally arid country at the end of November. Flood waters swept off the mountains and into Djibouti City, killing some 100 people and destroying many houses made of crates, canvas and other substandard materials. During French colonial rule the indigenous population was forbidden to build permanent houses in the city. Now, more than 20 years later, about two-thirds of Djibouti City residents continue to live in flimsy, "temporary" housing. Mennonite Central Committee and Eastern Mennonite Missions are assisting some of the 100,000 people affected by the flood, including Ethiopian and Somali refugees ineligible to receive assistance available to Djibouti citizens. MCC gave $41,000 Cdn./$30,000 U.S. for powdered milk and other relief food. MCC also gave $6,900 Cdn./$5,000 U.S. to two Ethiopian Mennonite churches whose members lost clothing, bedding and other household goods. EMM contributed $2,700 Cdn./$2,000 U.S. to this effort and is considering ways to help reconstruct some of the 1,000-plus damaged or destroyed houses.

destroyed for the sake of the world, so we can be the people of God in word and deed."

Diehl, a leader in the "ministry of daily life" movement, was the keynote speaker at the annual convention of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA). The Nov. 3-6, 1994, convention brought 551 participants, mostly businesspeople, to South Bend, Ind., to talk about cultivating a ministry of daily life.

Diehl said that during his career as sales manager for Bethlehem Steel, his church never recognized the work week as an area of Christian calling or testimony. "There seemed to be no place in my Monday world to address issues of faith, and no place in my Sunday world to address issues of work. They did not connect."

Diehl said one way Christians can manifest their faith in the workplace is through competency on the job. He noted that the biblical creation story points to competency in its first chapter: God looked at creation and declared it "very good."

Christians also connect their faith and work through interpersonal relations on the job as "bearers of Christ's love" by their ethical behavior, by the way they bring about change in their companies and by the witness of their daily lifestyles, Diehl said.

Another kind of connection for MEDA members was to use business skills to respond to urban blight. Roy Williams, a former banker who now pastors the College Hill Mennonite Church, Tampa, Fla., noted how difficult it is for the poor to get a foothold when they've been stereotyped.

"Have you ever been red-lined?" he asked. "Have you ever fallen into the little boxes that the bankers have drawn up?" He said some people spend their whole lives in the wrong boxes because someone has decided they live in the wrong zip code area to qualify for a job or a mortgage.

Lancaster, Pa., executive Carol Hess focused on family life by describing the innovative family programs at Lancaster Laboratories, a 520-employee company where she is executive vice president of human resources and administration.

The company's on-site day-care center, which enrolls 151 children, makes it easier for working mothers to resume their careers after having children. Hess said families are strengthened as parents are able to spend lunch hour or break time with their children. "And being able to look out the window and see your child swinging on the playground during the work day, well, that's a joy not available to many working parents."

The company has added day-care for frail or elderly adults to reduce employees' worries about residential placement.

Re-entering church: Putting a different twist on the convention theme, Janice and David Yordy Sutter said some businesspeople need help making the Sunday connection. The Sutters, who pastor the Kern Road Mennonite Church in South Bend, said at the Sunday worship service that "you are needed in the church. In a big way ... God needs you." The message of Ephesians was that Christ's coming reconciled foreigners and strangers, so no one need be alienated in the church.

They encouraged businesspeople who felt distant from their congregations to "proactively work your way back into the church and integrate your much-needed gifts into the body of Christ."

New MEDA president Ben Sprunger described the unique leveraging power of grants and earnings that MEDA programs use to stretch member donations. In 1995, he said, projected member contributions of $735,000 are expected to provide more than $5 million worth of programming.

Members were told that MEDA's overseas programs helped 18,000 families in low-income countries in the last year. Vice president Ron Braun said MEDA teaches fledgling businesspeople not only about making a profit but also how business can meet social and family needs and strengthen communities. He quoted a Haitian woman, whose country has just begun to emerge from ravaging oppression, as saying, "If I can find work I can start to forget the past and begin to build a meaningful future."

Members were told that MEDA grew by 363 new members in the past year, an increase of 13 percent, bringing total membership to 3,134.

Controller Gerhard Pries said member contributions had fallen short of projections over the past year resulting in a $28,000 deficit for 1994.

The next MEDA convention will be held Nov. 2-5 in Valley Forge, Pa.
Wally Kroeker

Saskatchewan farm economy looks good after Bangladesh experience

Winnipeg (MCC)—Before Doyle Wiebe went to Bangladesh in 1991, he thought farming in Canada was hard. But after three years in Bangladesh working with local farmers, he thinks life on his 1,800-acre farm near Langham, Sask., looks pretty good.

"When I go to the coffee shop this week I expect to hear all the usual complaining about how tough times are for farmers," says Wiebe, who recently returned from a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Bangladesh. "But it's nothing compared to the risks Bangladeshi farmers face every time they put seed into the ground—they risk everything to grow a crop, and there's no insurance if it fails."

Wiebe, who coordinated MCC's soybean project in Bangladesh, says farmers in that country face many risks. "If there's too much rain or not enough, you can be wiped out," he says. "There's nothing to fall back on if you lose a crop."

The goal of the soybean project was to introduce a new crop to Bangladesh that was high in protein, provided products such as milk and was good for the soil. Soybeans replace nitrogen in the soil, preparing it for the next crop. In a country where arable land is at a premium, "this is an important consideration," he says.

Wiebe points out that introducing a new crop in another country is not easy. Farmers need to learn how to grow and nurture it; a market has to be created for it; and businesspeople need to be convinced to sell it.

Says Wiebe: "There's an old saying that 'if you want to feed people for a day, give them food. If you want to feed them for life, teach them to grow food.' But it's not that simple. It involves processing, marketing and learning how to adapt traditional recipes."

Thus far soybeans have just a toehold in Bangladesh, with around 2,000 metric tons (MT) produced this year. Before the crop was harvested, MCC sent 72 MT of soybeans to Bangladesh through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to help develop markets for the larger crop. "The MCC shipment filled a critical need," says Wiebe.

Wiebe says this kind of work in other countries is different from merely sending food overseas; it increases the "food security" of local people by providing them with a viable food production system from planting seeds to selling produce.

John Longhurst

Jim King (MCC)

No agricultural picnic: *Nozrul Islam (left), MCC farm development facilitator, helps Bangladeshi farmer Abdur Rohim dry his soybeans to ready them for sale.*

China tested a nuclear weapon Oct. 7, 1994. The test measured 6.1 on the Richter scale. It was China's 41st test and the third since a nuclear testing moratorium was established in October 1992. (*Desert Voices*)

• • •

U.S. President Clinton signed the Peyote Bill Oct. 7, 1994. The legislation guarantees the right of Native Americans to use peyote in traditional Indian religious ceremonies. Peyote is a hallucinogenic drug which produces visions and changes in perception. The legislation exempts the religious use of peyote by Indians in traditional ceremonies from controlled substance laws of federal and state governments. (*Indian Life Magazine*)

• • •

Christian Peacemaker Teams trainees held a retirement party for G.I. Joe at a Chicago Toys R Us store Jan. 2. Concerned Chicagoans joined CPT for the occasion, at which G.I. Joe (portrayed by CPT member Jeff Heie) announced his retirement to the crowd. "For 30 years I've been deceiving children into thinking that killing ... is acceptable and even fun. For this I'm sorry," he said. Other CPT members tried to enter the store to remove the G.I. Joe toys from the shelves. They were stopped by Chicago police. Prior to the action, CPT had communicated with store managers. Toys R Us CEO Michael Goldstein contacted CPT director Gene Stoltzfus to discuss CPT's concerns. Their conversation ended amicably with Goldstein telling Stoltzfus, "What you advocate is good."

Record

Crime! A Christian response? Start a church-based Victim Offender Reconciliation Program in your area. Training at the Fresno, Calif., VORP with Ron Claassen, March 29-31. **Call 1-800-909-VORP**.

Winter conferences for business professionals and entrepreneurs will be held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Feb. 3-4 and in Phoenix March 16-20. The General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring events, which include fellowship, learning, golf and food! You'll learn to know how others in business handle success and problems. Participants will share how a relationship with the church can help in business and how your leadership can enhance your church and conference.

Call or write **Gary Franz** for a brochure: **(316) 283-5100** or **General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347**.

Bluffton College announces a tenure-track position as **assistant/associate professor of computer science** beginning fall 1995. Applicants should possess a Ph.D. or M.S. in computer science; those with completed Ph.D. will receive preferential screening but M.S. applicants will also be considered. The computer science major at Bluffton College is situated in the Science Department, and students follow a curriculum similar to the ACM guidelines for small colleges. Current requirements include strong physical science and mathematical components such as discrete math, calculus, numerical analysis, introductory physics and digital electronics. Applicants should feel comfortable teaching the usual computer science courses (computer programming, data structures, file processing, assembly language, computer architecture, operating systems and programming languages) from both a mathematical and physical perspective. By teaching the courses listed above (some on alternate years), the successful applicant will be teaching most of the courses in the computer science curriculum. Additionally, a liberal arts computer course exists.

Review of applications begins **Feb. 1**, until an appointment is made. Please submit letter of application, résumé or vita, three letters of reference and unofficial transcripts to **Donald L. Pannabecker, Ph.D., Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. Equal Opportunity Employer

DEATHS

George G. Dick died Dec. 19, 1994, at age 87. He served as pastor at First Church, Lima, Ohio (1939-1943); Bethlehem Church, Bloomfield, Mont. (1943-1945); Bethel Church, Winton, Calif. (1955-1965); North Danvers Church, Danvers, Ill. (1966-1970), and Summerfield (Ill.) Church (1972-1986). He also served at Camp Landon, Gulfport, Miss., and was a chaplain at Kingsview Hospital in Reedley, Calif.

MINISTERS

Arthur Bergen has ended his term as pastor at First United Spanish Mennonite Church in Vancouver.

Ken Hildebrandt is part-time youth worker at Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C.

Patrick Preheim has ended as interim assistant pastor at Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan.

Jake Tilitzky began as half-time interim pastor Dec. 1, 1994, at Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C.

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission

WORKERS

Ron Claassen, founder of the Fresno, Calif., Victim Offender Reconciliation Program, was awarded a certificate of appreciation on Dec. 8, 1994, by the city of Fresno for his VORP work.

Helen and **Henry Dueck**, Herbert, Sask., retired COM workers, joined the teaching staff at the Steinreich Bible School near Cuauhtemoc, Mexico, in January for several months. COM is providing support for them during their stay in Mexico.

Lisa Enns, North Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, returned to Canada in November 1994 after a two-year term as an overseas mission volunteer with COM in Colombia, where she worked in the offices and library of the Latin America Anabaptist Resource Center and helped with church-related activities.

Gary and **Jean Isaac**, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and COM workers, and members of Grace Hill Church, Whitewater, Kan., arrived in the United States Dec. 8, 1994, for a two-month North America Assignment. They serve in South Africa as Bible teachers with the African Independent Churches.

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MAY 30 – JUNE 13, 1995

Join Professor Wilbur Maust of Conrad Grebel College for a musical and cultural experience in Vienna, an international music center for centuries.

For more information on this tour or other tours, please write or call.

Tulip Time in Holland	April 18 to May 1	Henry D. Landes, Pieter & Martha Gotwals Postma
Lands of the Bible	May 10-23	John & Naomi Lederach
European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5-21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10-26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes
England/Scotland	August 9-24	Wilmer Martin & Mary Rittenhouse Schwartzentruber
Mexico	November 15-30	Cal Redekop

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Bethel College is seeking candidates for three tenure-track faculty positions beginning in August: **mathematics, physical chemistry** and **Spanish**. Ph.D. required for all positions. Commitment to undergraduate teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration and Bethel's mission as a church-related college are essential; familiarity with disciplinary software and network applications desired. Qualifications and experience will be considered for salary and rank.

Complete job descriptions are available from the academic dean's office. Applications should include résumé, three letters of reference and recent graduate school transcript if applicable. Consideration will begin Feb. 15 and continue until positions are filled.

Materials should be sent to: **Wynn M. Goering, Academic Dean, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th St., North Newton, KS 67117**. Bethel is an equal opportunity employer, and especially encourages women and minorities to apply.

Position open for **regional church relations director,** General Conference Mennonite Church. This position seeks to develop and enhance relationships with member churches in a geographic region outside the Newton, Kan., area. Requires strong organizational and people skills and familiarity with Mennonite beliefs and institutions. Some travel and Sunday presentations will be required. Computer abilities and self-starter skills are essential. This is an entry-level position of resource development. Salary commensurate with experience and training.

Before Feb. 15, send résumé or call **Gary Franz, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100**.

Eden Mennonite Church, Chilliwack, B.C., requires a full-time **senior pastor**. Applicant must have extensive pastoral experience and ability to lead a pastoral staff and congregation of 300 members. Emphasis on Anabaptist theology, strong preaching and teaching skills.

Apply **by Feb. 15** to **Frank Letkeman, C37-52324 Yale Road East, Rosedale, BC V0X 1X0; (604) 794-3723.**

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Abraham and Sarah

Reviews

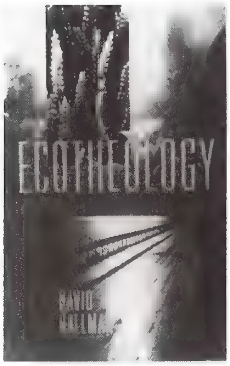
BOOKS

ANGLES ON ECOLOGY

Ecotheology: Voices from South and North, *edited by David G. Hallman (World Council of Churches Publications/ Orbis Books, 1994, 316 pages)*

Reviewed by David E. Ortman, Seattle

How do religious and ethical responses to our environmental crisis differ around the world? These 25 essays, edited by the energy and environment program officer for the United Church of Canada, bring together "the most current thinking on ecological theology and ethics from Southern and Northern perspectives."



The contributors, including those from the United States and Canada, are unfamiliar to Mennonites. Among them, Catherine Keller, who teaches at Drew University in New Jersey, writes about a possible Christian response to the population apocalypse. M.L. Daneel, professor at the University of South Africa, describes how the African Independent Churches face the challenge of environmental ethics. K.C. Abraham, director of the South Asia Theological Research Institute, points out that when God decided to spare Nineveh it was also out of pity for the many animals (Jonah 4:11).

The essays, many footnoted, are divided into five parts: Biblical Witness, Theological Challenges, Insights from Eco-Feminism, Insights from Indigenous Peoples and Ethical Implications.

Unfortunately the book assumes a close familiarity with the World Council of Churches (WCC), including its work on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), as well as the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit in Brazil). While the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and excerpts from One Earth Community (prepared by the United Church of Canada) are included in an essay appendix, background material on the JPIC process would have been useful.

A bit more editing would have helped. The U.N. Environment Conference took place 22 years ago, not 30, and the WCC World Conference on Church and Society took place 28 years ago, not 30. One essay attributes a quote to Chief Seattle in 1854 that was actually written by Ted Perry in the early 1970s.

I would recommend this book as a starting point to catch the flavor of current North-South finger pointing: "You (the South) are overpopulating and destroying your environment." "You (the North) are overconsuming and wish us to remain in poverty." It should be required reading for Mennonite Central Committee workers.

General Secretary of the Reformed Church in America Wesley Granberg-Michaelson notes in his essay, "Only in the past decade has theological attention to creation emerged as a widely acknowledged point of orientation in ecumenical circles. While this new focus is a welcome change from earlier neglect and suspicion, ... it still poses more questions and challenges than answers."

Which means Mennonites can still make a contribution, if they choose.

USABLE LITERATURE

Braiding Hearts and Hands: A Poetry and Dramatic Arts Anthology, *edited by Kathleen Hull and Wendy Kroeker (Mennonite Central Committee Canada, 1994, 111 pages)*

Reviewed by Suzanne Lawrence, Goessel, Kan.

We know what to do with drama, but we do not always know what to do with poems. This is an anthology, not of the highest literary efforts of Canadian women having some connection to Mennonite Central Committee, but of some of the usable literary efforts of that group—scripts and poems that are usable for worship and education, as well as for performance.

A good part of Hull's introduction is devoted to practical suggestions for using the pieces. Indicative of the book's commitment to practicality are the easy-to-read type, heavy paper and spiral binding.

The first time through this book is the hardest, because of an unpredictable mix of voice, genre and quality. After that, you can skip

TULIP TIME IN HOLLAND
April 18 to May 1, 1995

Our Dutch Mennonite tour leaders, Pieter and Martha Gotwals Postma, will welcome you at the height of the spring flower season. By boat, bike (if you like) and motorcoach, they will introduce you to their homeland, from the Delta to Friesland.

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Vienna: Music & Culture	May 30 - June 13	Wilbur Maust
European Health Care	July 3-18	Joseph G. Landis & Aldred Neufeldt
European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5-21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10-26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes

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around to your favorites.

The first two chapters are filled with guilt and despair. It took me two weeks to read those 48 pages. Chapters three through five, however, provide plenty of hope for healing, and I read them all at once.

Kroeker says her aim was to "provide room for alternative voices to talk about peace and justice issues as they impact all our lives." The voices are female, old and young, professional and amateur. Issues are categorized in a topical index of 22 headings, including abuse, environment, family, global realities, theology and tradition. Most of the pieces tell stories. Several Bible stories are dramatized, including two versions of the Mary/Martha story.

For the sake of issues and for the sake of art, I recommend that preachers, worship leaders, Bible teachers and men's or women's group leaders get hold of this book and figure out ways to use it in their groups.

I also recommend it for personal, meditative reading. I will donate my copy to my church library only when I can memorize Ruth Krahn's "Holy Spirit" and when the last scene of Elizabeth Coffman's "Four Women" ceases to make me sob.

THE PASTORAL PINCH

Being Holy Being Human: Dealing with the Incredible Expectations and Pressures of Ministry *by Jay Kesler (Bethany House, 1994, 182 pp.)*

Reviewed by Matt Friesen, Wichita, Kan.

Finding a good resource addressing pastoral pressures is not an easy job. In our computer-driven information age, popular books roll off the presses like endless waves drumming against the beach.

And while I found Jay Kesler's effort to address the pressures of ministry an important one, I was disappointed with the result.

Kesler brings many strengths to this project, including years of pastoral experience and an ability to write clearly without the use of intimidating theological jargon.

It is unfortunate, however, that while sharing a tidal wave of common sense, Kesler does not explore the deeper currents of pastoral ministry.

In some areas Kesler seems to send a mixed message. While encouraging ministers to accept God's grace in not feeling the need to be perfect, he then goes on to offer mountains of practical suggestions. At times he leaves me wondering if this book is aimed at releasing ministers from their bondage to a messiah-complex or attempting to give more ways to become better saviors.

This confusion is accentuated by the absence of a strong biblical foundation of pastoral ministry. Beyond the idea that pastors live in a tension between holiness and humanness, there is little foundation upon which to build an understanding of who the pastor is called to be in relation to the congregation.

What I found myself longing for throughout the book was a deeper analysis of why ministers find themselves facing overload and burnout. To what extent are the "incredible expectations and pressures of ministry" placed on us by our own egos and fears of failure, and the need to be needed? How can pastors create boundaries between the church and one's family, home and personal space?

Although I found many of Kesler's experiences both humorous and enlightening, I continue to search for resources that will assist me in exploring the deeper questions of pastoral identity.

BONHOEFFER FAMILY STORY

The Bonhoeffers: Portrait of a Family *by Sabine Leibholz-Bonhoeffer (Covenant Publications, 1994, 175 pp.)*

Reviewed by Janet Goldsmith, Benton, Ill.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) is the hero (often considered a martyr) of many texts exploring the books he wrote, his church work, his teaching at an illegal seminary of the resistance church in Nazi Germany, and his imprisonment in concentration camps and execution. During his brief adulthood Bonhoeffer lived a courageous mix of pacifism (refusing to take up arms for Germany) and carefully chosen violence (participating in an attempt to assassinate Hitler).

In *The Bonhoeffers: Portrait of a Family*, Sabine Leibholz-Bonhoeffer—Dietrich's twin sister—proposes to set his extraordinary story within the larger and lesser known narrative of their family of origin. She also seeks to tell the story of her own family's exile to England, within the larger narrative of many refugees fleeing Hitler and the Nazis.

The author opens a small window into the Bonhoeffer household of eight siblings (Dietrich and Sabine are numbers six and seven) growing up in the privileged household of Paula and Karl (a psychiatrist and professor), encircled by German intelligentsia. All family relations (in multiple generations) are described so glowingly—no dysfunction in this family—that a Victorian-era portrait emerges, often at the cost of depth. The book seeks to describe each sibling and quickly summarize his or her life events, but the writing (with the exception of direct quotes and precious letter excerpts) is not specific, anecdotal or candid enough to render clear pictures of eight unique individuals.

Leibholz-Bonhoeffer is far more interesting, and revealing, in describing the exile of herself, Gerhardt, her half-Jewish husband, and their two daughters, along with thousands of other Germans, to England from the fall of 1938 until 1947. Her treatment of the family's strange years of survival in England explores aspects of the European wartime rarely focused on in historical survey. It seems clear that those unfortunate enough to become German refugees in England had been the more fortunate at home—many professors, lawyers and other "white collar" professionals among them. In England in 1939-1940, "all male refugees of German or Austrian nationality between the ages of 16 and 70 … were now interned," including Gerhardt.

The Bonhoeffers: Portrait of a Family is an informative text for readers interested in the exile of non-Nazi Germans during the war years in Great Britain. The reader more interested in the adult life events and theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer would be better served by books of Eberhard and Renate Bethge (also family members) and other "Bonhoefferites."

Tell us what you think.

Write **The Mennonite**, P.O.
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Editorial

Hatred is a heresy

Learning to know other people can change your perspective. I thought I'd had a bad week early in January. My daughter had an allergic reaction during a wedding reception, a pipe in the kitchen began leaking, our furnace stopped working properly while the temperature outside went down to 0° F, and the car did not start one morning. These and several other aberrations in the week left me weary.

Then I read the stories that appear in this issue. My attitude changed. I became grateful that I could take my daughter to the emergency room for treatment, that medical care and supplies were available. The problem with the furnace and the pipe seemed minor in light of people in the former Yugoslavia who have only meager shelter and little heat. My bad week paled beside the bad years these people have faced.

Panta Zuk, whom you see reading a copy of *The Mennonite* on page 9 of this issue, summarizes the lesson well. He could not understand refugees' sadness until he became a refugee himself. While our sympathy (feeling with) with refugees may not be complete without becoming one, we can draw closer to these people as we read their stories and let them lead us to prayer.

In this season of Epiphany, let us also remember that Jesus was a refugee as a child, having fled to Egypt for safety from Herod's sword (Matthew 2:13-15). Then as an adult he lived in a land occupied by a foreign power, Rome. He saw the suffering this power imposed on his own people.

In the Jan. 29 Gospel reading, Luke 4:22-30, we read about Jesus going to Nazareth, his hometown, where at the synagogue he is invited to read from the prophetic scroll and comment. The home crowd likes him until he talks about judgment on Israel, then refers to stories of Elijah and Elisha and their healing of gentiles. This fills them with rage, and they try to stone him for heresy. Thus Jesus becomes a refugee from his own hometown.

When the awful conflict in the former Yugoslavia flared up some three years ago, Muslims, Serbs and Croats lived together peaceably. Suddenly others told them they were enemies. It was now heresy not to hate the other ethnic groups. They had to return to the old ways of hating those not like themselves. To this kind of hatred Jesus speaks a firm no. Such hatred is a heresy.

In North America we may not have armies fighting across our land, but there is plenty of hatred being passed around. Some radio talk shows fill the airwaves with hateful speech. Some political leaders want to punish the poor and give tax breaks to the wealthy. In California, many people voted to take away medical and educational services from immigrants (see page 13).

If we are to be faithful where we live, we must resist the temptation to show hatred—to even speak it—and we must learn to sympathize with others.

Unless we learn some sympathy toward others, we may be facing similar kinds of violence and social breakdown that the former Yugoslavia faces.

Jesus met people where they lived and ministered to their needs. Part of the reason he could do this is that he had experienced similar circumstances.

The Jan. 9 issue of *Christianity Today* tells about Kathy Dudley's ministry in the inner city of West Dallas, Texas. Although she is white, she has been able to connect with residents there because she grew up in poverty in Appalachia. She knows what it feels like to be poor.

If we are to be faithful where we live, we must resist the temptation to show hatred—to even speak it—and we must learn to sympathize with others. Let us listen to their stories and take them into our hearts, then share with them the Good News we have experienced in Jesus Christ.
Gordon Houser

$2.00

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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FEBRUARY 14, 1995

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- 7 strategies for a healthy marriage (see page 6)

Love never ends

(1 Corinthians 13:8)

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Prologue

The charming couple on the cover is not Uncle Jesse and Aunt Lydia. We don't have pictures of either of them. But they do illustrate the faithfulness and joy that characterize the love God calls us to practice.

If you or I were asked to love someone for 30 years who would not return our love, I'm not sure we could do it. Uncle Jesse, in the article that begins on page 3, did not find it easy either. He simply took one day at a time.

Victor Parachin offers seven strategies for a healthy marriage (page 6). These are not part of a magic formula either. Each is a practical, down-to-earth practice that seems mundane but helps relationships thrive.

In our Speaking Out column (page 9), James Pankratz calls for men to be countercultural and stop acting like junior high-age boys.

J.B. Miller (page 10) tells how he changed his mind about whether or not to give something to "panhandlers."

New Testament professor Jacob Elias (page 11) presents a study of Romans 1:16—2:1. And in a turnabout-is-fair-play article (page 12), pastor David Bergen, who had been interviewed by Carla Reimer, interviews her. I believe each of them learned something through the encounter.

We have some interesting issues coming up. Perhaps you know someone who would like to see *The Mennonite*. Let us know, and we'll send them a free sample along with subscription information. *gh*

Next issue: The Lord's Supper

Cover: Photo by Religious News Service

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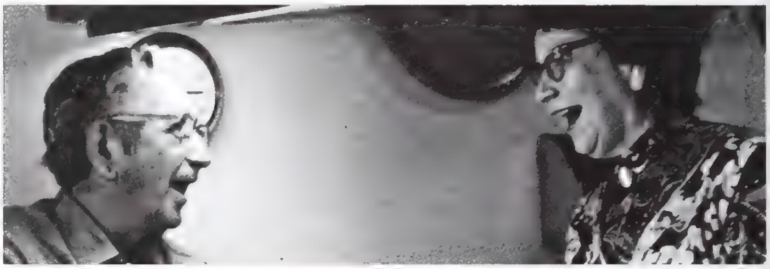
6 Seven strategies for a healthy marriage

Having a happy marriage involves paying attention to the little things.



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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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Uncle Jesse and Aunt Lydia: a love story

Ronald J. Sider

Even though his wife remained hospitalized with mental illness for 30 years, Uncle Jesse remained faithful to his marriage vows.

I always called him Uncle Jesse. As a teenager I thought of him as that friendly uncle with the shock of white hair and warm smile whom everyone in my home congregation respected. We all knew that Uncle Jesse had to raise his two daughters by himself because his wife had been institutionalized for mental illness for as long as any of us could remember. But I never thought much about that—as a teenager, that is. His warmth and joy seldom betrayed deeper pain.

I've been married for almost 30 years. As I have experienced the ecstasy, the pain and the renewed joy of a growing, fulfilling marriage, I have wondered what it must have been like for Uncle Jesse to live alone for 30 years of married life.

As I've watched marriages crumble because they were not fulfilling, I've wondered what kept Uncle Jesse married for 30 years while Lydia, his wife, lived 50 miles away in a mental hospital.

I decided to ask him. While visiting my family at Christmas in 1986, I interviewed him. Here—mostly in his own words—is the story of this devout southern Ontario farmer and the young woman he loved.

Jesse and Lydia had been friends since childhood. They went to the same Brethren in Christ church full of hard-working farmers. "I had strong attractions to her when I was pretty young, and she was young. We went together a little, broke off a little, then went together again. The second time she seemed hesitant. I prayed about it and told the Lord I would not go back to see her again unless she made some overtures to me first. Then she wrote me a letter and invited me to come back."

After a five-year courtship they were married on Sept. 9, 1931. Lydia had turned 21 three days earlier—her family believed that you shouldn't get married until you reached 21. Jesse was 22.

"To me she was the one in the world," he said. "And I think I kept that right to the end."

The first seven years of life together were good—for "both of us, as far as I know," Uncle Jesse told me. In February 1933 their first child, Anna

For 30 years Uncle Jesse drove the two hours to Hamilton every two or three weeks to visit the woman he had promised to love for better or worse till death.

Mae, arrived. Then on the morning of Dec. 30, 1935, a second daughter, Ruth, was born. Back then, mothers normally gave birth at home.

"That evening we had a lot of company," Jesse said, "which was wrong, I see now. Childbearing being kind of easy for her, she really had a good time that night."

But the next morning, something was wrong. Lydia was in great health, but she behaved strangely. The doctor recommended total rest.

Mental illness had invaded a happy marriage. For 2 1/2 years Lydia was able to live at home. Then in the middle of 1938, Lydia "let loose and became unmanageable at home. She had all kinds of ideas. One morning she announced that I was not her husband. She said we weren't lawfully married—we weren't married at all."

They were living in a double house, so Lydia moved in with Uncle Andrew's family next door. One morning, while Uncle Jesse was milking the cows, Lydia heard some hunters in the woods. When she heard a gun go off, she announced that Jesse had shot himself. "He was all right, he was a good fellow, but he's gone, he shot himself," she said. With that, she came over to Jesse's side of the house. Jesse came in to find Lydia lying on the floor, in front of the space heater. He washed and got ready for breakfast, and as soon as he left the room, she went back to Uncle Andrew's.

In January 1939 Jesse took her to the Hamilton hospital, one of the best psychiatric hospitals in southern Ontario. The government would have covered the costs, but Uncle Jesse wanted to pay them himself. And he did—for 30 years.

At first Uncle Jesse kept checking with the doctors each week when he visited Lydia, believing that his wife would soon be better. One day the doctor called him into the office. "Your wife is not going to get any better," he announced. "I think you should go home and make a new life. Take care of your girls and forget about this woman. The girls don't even need to know she ever lived."

"Well, Doc," Uncle Jesse said, "I can go home and take care of the girls, but I can't forget her. She's part of me."

"Well, what are you going to tell the girls?"

"I am going to tell them their mother is sick." The doctor let the matter drop.

For 30 years Uncle Jesse drove the two hours to Hamilton every two or three weeks to visit the woman he had promised to love for better or worse till death.

"Usually she was glad to see me," he said as we talked that Christmas. "Sometimes, though, she would hope I broke my neck on the way home. When that happened I'd go home and think, What am I going to do? No use me going up there any more. Then I couldn't help but think about her, and in a week or two I'd be back up again, and I might get an entirely different response."

One day, when he was out in the barn, he was praying for her, and he definitely felt the Lord had heard his prayer. The next day he found a letter from Lydia in the mailbox. She hadn't written home for years. But in her letter she took a penitent attitude, saying she thought there had been a misunderstanding.

"I've often wished that I'd dropped everything and gone up to see her right away." But since he was busy on the farm that day, he didn't get to Hamilton until a few days later. He showed the doctor the letter, thinking that this was the answer to his prayer.

"Don't bank too hard on it," the doctor warned.

When Jesse saw Lydia, her mood had changed drastically. "She reminded me of a teeter-totter. When she wrote the letter, she'd been on one side. But when I got to see her, she didn't know what she thought of me. Still, I think the whole ordeal strengthened me as far as the Lord was concerned."

After Lydia had been in the hospital a long time, the doctor again called Uncle Jesse in. He said, "Lydia says she wants a divorce."

"Well, if she had her right mind, she wouldn't want a divorce," Uncle Jesse said. "But I brought her here to get help. So if you think a divorce is the answer—I'm sure in my mind it isn't, but if you think it is—I won't say no. If you think it's needed, then go on with it."

The doctor never mentioned the subject again. Jesse thinks the doctors

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> ***"I thought, This isn't fair; she was 29 years old when this happened. But that kind of thinking doesn't get you anywhere."***
>
> **Uncle Jesse**

may have been testing to see if he would take a rigid stance against a divorce. "Perhaps they were trying to determine whether or not I was contributing to Lydia's illness."

Lobotomy: For many years Uncle Jesse hoped and prayed that God would heal his wife. "Why she couldn't get healed, I don't know. That's one of the mysteries of this life." In 1953 the doctors suggested performing a lobotomy. (In this surgical operation, used for treating serious psychological disorders, a lobe of the brain is cut.)

For some inexplicable reason, the doctors chose to operate on Lydia the same day their oldest daughter Anna Mae was married. So Uncle Jesse could not be present, as the doctors had requested, when Lydia first came out of the anesthetic.

But when he saw Lydia the next day, he marveled at the change in her. She asked questions about home and other things she had not talked about in years. "This was the first thing that ever showed any signs of really helping her."

"Now don't expect her to stay like that," the doctors cautioned. "She'll drift back, but we hope she'll come back up to this point again in about six months."

After a little while, Uncle Jesse tried having Lydia home for a week or two, but it didn't work well. One time she wandered away from home to my parents' farm about four miles away. "Some people were scared of her. It was a long pull there." My dad went along as Uncle Jesse sadly returned her to the hospital.

Months later he tried bringing her home again. This time it went better. The doctors had been testing various kinds of medication for Lydia. Finally they found the right combination. After 29 years of separation, Lydia was home again. She was "not quite normal, but livable." For three years Uncle Jesse gently cared for the woman he still thought of as his youthful sweetheart and bride.

Then one Thursday Lydia became sick to her stomach. Four days later she died of a ruptured appendix. Because of the operation on her brain she never felt the pain that otherwise would have warned her that something was wrong.

The day before she died, Uncle Jesse visited her in the hospital. "Would you pray for me?" Lydia asked.

This was a bit unusual. "I'm sure she was a Christian before her mind got warped, but after that she could think most anything. While she was home those last years she never showed any spiritual emotions at all that I could see. And now she said, 'Would you pray for me?' And I said, 'Sure, I'll pray for you.'" The next day she was gone. "I felt as if this was the Lord's time to take her home. It all went so peacefully."

I cried as I listened to his story. And I cried often as I listened later to the tape and wrote this story.

"Did you ever feel angry with the Lord?" I asked.

"I did at first," he said. "I thought, This isn't fair; she was 29 years old when this happened. But that kind of thinking doesn't get you anywhere. In all those years, I did not once feel that she was a burden. Oh sure, she was a burden, but I never felt that it was anything I should be relieved of. I loved her, and I did all I could."

"Do you think it would be harder today to do what you did?" I asked. "Thirty years back, divorce was seldom heard of, but today husbands abandon their wives for far less."

"I can't understand the modern attitude," Uncle Jesse said. "I chose a wife who I thought was it. Now why, after 10 years, would I want to get rid of her for somebody else?"

"It looks like a difficult road you've been asked to walk," I said.

"Yes, especially if I'd seen those 30 years ahead," he said. "I took her up [to the hospital] with the feeling that, like others I'd seen, she would be [coming home] in three months or so. It just didn't work that way with her. We walk with the Lord one day at a time."

Uncle Jesse made a vow before God with the woman he loved to live in a lifelong covenant, for better or for worse. And it got much worse. But he kept that covenant, by God's grace, one day at a time.

Ronald J. Sider is professor of theology and culture at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and the executive director of Evangelicals for Social Action. His father and Jesse are first cousins. This article was first published in Moody Monthly.

Having a happy marriage involves paying attention to the little things.

7 *strategies for a health*

Victor M. Parachin

Recently 20 Chinese couples "tied the knot" in a mass wedding on the Great Wall. According to an official Chinese newspaper the couples chose this site in hopes their marriages would be like the Great Wall—"able to withstand the winds and the rains."

That Chinese ceremony contrasts with another wedding that took place in the aisle of an American supermarket. The couple said, "We thought it would be romantic to be married in the place where we first met."

Lasting relationships need the creativity exhibited by the supermarket couple and the strength symbolized by the Great Wall couples. Here are seven strategies for a healthy and happy marriage.

1 Forget the 50-50 approach. In the long run, healthy and happy couples are those who pitch in and do more than their fair share. They understand the wisdom of Jesus' advice: "Give and it will be given to you" (Luke 6:38).

Some couples rigidly expect everything in a relationship to be shared equally. The truth is that when two people marry and live together, everything is subject to negotiation. Who cleans the house? Who does laundry? Who makes certain the car is properly maintained and repaired? Who pays the bills? Who cooks? These are just some practical matters that need to be understood and agreed upon.

2 Remember the romance of the unromantic. One man, married 25 years, advises, "Find something your partner detests doing and do it for them. My wife can't stand to do laundry. Shortly after we were married, I told her that laundry was off limits to her. I've done all our family laundry for 25 years. It seemed to take a big burden off her shoulders, and I really don't mind doing it."

Something as unromantic as doing the laundry can send a powerful message of love. Happy couples know that performing trivial but burdensome chores for their spouses are meaningful acts of love. Consider picking up her clothes from the cleaner, filling his car with gas, helping fold the sheets. These are small but important ways husbands and wives can show how they feel about each other.

3 Practice patience. The ability to be patient is a sign of personal maturity. It is a vital life skill through which dreams can be transformed into reality. The exercise of patience is a strong defense against easy defeat. That is why Jesus commanded us to exercise patience: "By standing firm you will gain life" (Luke 21:19). Couples who practice patience give their relationship the chance to grow with time. Much of what binds two people is found in their common history of living and loving together.

4 Disagree without being disagreeable. Every couple will have differences of opinion, taste, style, desire and preferences. In every successful marriage partners learn how to manage such differences and fight fair. Couples who disagree without being disagreeable clear the clutter and strengthen the relationship.

Psychologist Lawrence Balter says, "Learn to stop a developing argument in its tracks. Plan a strategy with your spouse when you feel a discussion is about to escalate into an angry exchange. One of you might say, 'This isn't the place for us to argue. Let's stop now and discuss it later.' Keep in mind, though, that despite your best efforts, you probably won't always succeed in avoiding arguments."

5 Let there be healing. "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32). Every marriage must make room for the healing of hurts. Healing in a relationship takes place when an apology is given *and received*. If

arriage

Couples whose relationship is like the Great Wall of China—strong, secure and steady—know how to express their love daily.

Rohn Engh (for illustration only)

differences erupt into harsh, hurtful words, an apology and a time for reconciliation are crucial to the long-term health of the marriage. When an offending partner offers an apology, the other partner should respond graciously and generously.

6 Censor the critic inside you. A great deal of joy and delight is lost in marriage because the partners are too critical of each other. They view one another through hostile eyes rather than loving eyes. In her book *Opening Our Hearts to Men*, Susan Jeffers recommends that couples practice sidestepping negativity when they feel critical. She describes how it works in her relationship. On one occasion she and her husband, Mark, were driving through some beautiful countryside. She was upset about an earlier incident. "Just as I was ready to pounce on him I bit my lip, sidestepped my negativity and said, 'I'm so glad we have this afternoon together. I love you.'"

Even though Susan was not feeling loving at that time, her words transformed the atmosphere. Mark reached out, touched her hand and declared his love for her. "The hardness in my heart melted, and so did my anger," she says. "What happened was that I created the atmosphere for love to occur instead of a fight."

7 Appreciate yourself as others do. Some people grew up in homes where they were constantly criticized as children and never given respect. As adults those individuals continue to expect rejection and are afraid of love and intimacy. Self-acceptance and self-worth form the basis for a healthy marriage.

Adele Scheele, author of *Skills for Success*, offers these tips for improving self-appreciation: "It's worthwhile to reread your résumé, old birthday cards or fan letters you've received from family and friends. Find newspaper clips mentioning your accomplishments or any other work you've done that you're proud of. Post these items on your home bulletin board, and let them serve as quick reminders of how smart, accomplished, courageous and loved you are."

Couples whose relationship is like the Great Wall of China—strong, secure and steady—know how to express their love daily. In large and small ways, they demonstrate how much they value their partner.

Victor M. Parachin lives in Virginia Beach, Va.

Letters

FACE OUR OWN STRUGGLES

I was puzzled by a letter written recently by Robert Erck (Dec. 27, 1994, issue). In it he commends Gordon Houser on a good editorial about the disease of affluence. He admits that he, like most of us, is concerned more with enjoying middle-class comforts than with helping the less fortunate. He then suggests that what we need is to hear more stories from people who have chosen discomfort in order to help their neighbors. He does *not* want to hear from overseas workers who have returned to a comfortable North American lifestyle. He wants to hear from people continuing in discomfort and laboring in obscurity.

My question is why? Why such a negative judgment on overseas workers? Cannot overseas workers help us wrestle with our own addiction to affluence? They are products of this culture just like we are. They have wrestled with this same dilemma; and often more directly than those who have not worked overseas.

So why not enter into dialogue? Why the sarcasm? I think it's because returned overseas workers are too much like us. They are too close for comfort. We are embarrassed about our affluence and returning overseas workers make us face this embarrassment. It's easier for us to scapegoat them and look for "purer" people to inspire us. This seems like an avoidance of responsibility to me. More stories from people who choose discomfort and work in obscurity are not going to solve our problem for us. They can't live our faith for us. We have to face our own struggles and do it ourselves. *Scott Brubaker-Zehr, Waterloo, Ont.*

LETHAL DISCRIMINATION

In his Dec. 27, 1994, letter, Robert Erck says he doesn't believe embryos are human. He's seen rows of embryos in glass jars that "could only with difficulty be identified as human and not canine." If it's merely *difficult* to identify them as human, it's not impossible, so Erck has contradicted himself. Embryos that were the offspring of human parents cannot be of anything other than the human species.

Then Erck says that somewhere along the length of the display, "the objects in the glass jars started to look like babies, which is probably why it is difficult or illegal in most states to obtain a late-term abortion."

It's sad to see a Mennonite advocating lethal discrimination on the basis of looks. Anyway, the truth is that abortion has been legal [in the United States] during all nine months of pregnancy since 1973, in all 50 states.

Erck claims that if right-to-lifers were consistent they'd demand that pregnant women who use drugs or alcohol be sent to prison. Personally, I'd prefer to see such women ordered by the courts to attend rehabilitation programs, at least until their babies are born.

On the question of whether death penalty opponents must oppose abortion, I agree with the consistent pro-life stand of the early church, typified by Athenagoras, who said, circa A.D. 175, "For when they know that we cannot endure even to see a man put to death, though justly, who of them can accuse us of murder or cannibalism? … And when we say that those women who use drugs to bring on abortion commit murder, and will have to give an account to God for the abortion, on what principle should we commit murder?" *Jerry C. Stanaway, Elmhurst, Ill.*

DON'T ABANDON MORALITY

Nihilism is defined by Webster as "a doctrine that denies moral principles and social obligations." We in the Mennonite churches are allowing this "new theology" to dominate our agenda and missions. For example the current debates on homosexuality, abortion or even church discipline should not even be debated. I can see a need to debate how we should handle such issues of sin, but not whether or not they are sin. We are devaluing the base of morality, which will lead to a valueless community.

I understand the culture around us may debate these issues. And well it should. It is largely without a source of morality—God and God's Word. But when the church begins this long, deadly pursuit, we are on a journey down the road with a once "great prophet" who said he was freeing a people "from the stupid and degrading fallacies of conscience and morality." The resulting problem of this should be especially troubling for our community of faith, which holds to a peace ethic (social obligation) based in the person, teachings and divinity of Jesus Christ. Listen to the resulting problem of this approach to life without morality, which is essentially a pursuit of life without the God of the Bible: "We will train our young people before whom the world will tremble. I want young people capable of violence—imperious, relentless and cruel." This is only possible when you remove or destroy the conscience and moral base of these young people. This was the conception of the most educated land of its day, where the Enlightenment was birthed, and are the very words of that once "great prophet"—Hitler.

It seems evident to many present-day disciples of Jesus that a return to biblical conviction and truth that outlines morality, generates repentance and realizes humility is necessary for our present darkness. These characteristics are missing in many of our discussions today. Instead of being dispensers of truth we have become a watered-down alternative, just another possibility in life's maze of philosophies. I plead with brothers and sisters of like mind to pray for our church to be cleansed and to regain the heart of God. Then we will return to being fishers of men and women who need ultimate reconciliation: salvation. *Brad Bame, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

Ideas your church can try

First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, began a series of coffeehouses last November called Blaurock Cafe. Named for 16th-century Anabaptist leader George Blaurock, the seasonal coffeehouse features local musicians, poets and anyone with something to share, hoping to honor the creativity of people in the congregation. Members are urged to invite friends and family.

Speaking out

The adolescent male culture

Men need to stop being boys and become men.

James Pankratz

There are some trends in modern culture that have puzzled and troubled me for a long time, but I couldn't see the relationship between them until I read an essay in *The Atlantic Monthly* entitled "Where the Boys Are." It argues that "the unspoken premise of much of American pop culture is that a large group of men would like nothing better than to go back to their junior high school locker rooms and stay there."

That makes sense of a lot of features of our culture.

It helps explain the zany craziness of David Letterman, *Wayne's World* and *City Slickers*. Goofiness and absurdity are excused by the manic smiles, the awkward "Aw shucks" shrug of the shoulders. Of course it's silly. "We're just having fun." Foolishness has no consequences.

It accounts for the outstanding success of Arnold Schwarzenegger films. When you're a 90-pound weakling getting pushed around by bullies, you dream of a body-building program that is so effective and quick that the next time you meet your tormentors you leave them whipped and scattered. Project that into a fantasy world of cosmic villains and technology and you have movie after movie and video game after video game that are high-tech versions of a schoolyard or back-alley brawl.

It's one way to understand the long-lasting popularity of *Cheers*, with its relentless sexism. The "girls" know that they're in boys' territory, so their best defense is to become as sarcastic and quick-tongued as the "guys." The only way they can be accepted or get the upper hand is to be better at the boys' game than the boys are. Occasionally the women protest and stomp out of the room; inevitably the guys look at each other in disbelief, hardly able to imagine why anyone would get so upset by some friendly insults.

There is plenty of other evidence of the dominance of this adolescent male culture. Taunting a fallen and beaten opponent has become such a common practice in football that leagues have introduced a penalty to reduce it. Watching a huge lineman "trash talk" a sacked quarterback is reminiscent of seeing a bully spit on his bloodied victim in the corner of the schoolyard.

Listen to the interruptions, shouting and badgering on some of the television public affairs interview and debate programs. They sound like yelling matches in the high school cafeteria.

Sexual conquest: Our society has long tolerated the culture of adolescent boys because it knew that at some point in life, at least by marriage, a boy would become a man, "put away childish things" and become responsible, disciplined and respected. This was symbolized by one last irresponsible fling "with the guys" at a stag party just before marriage.

But now the images that surround us are of men who continue to act like boys. They boast, they leer, they hang out with the guys, they worship the raw power of fast cars, sexual conquest, bulging muscles and rapid-fire guns.

The images that surround us [in our culture] are of men who continue to act like boys.

They are, like one of their heroes, Bart Simpson, resentful of rational authority. They prefer to establish their own superiority by intimidation, insult and embarrassment.

It's an extension of high school locker rooms: bragging about sex, insulting the victim of the day, scorning authority, jostling the weak, mocking the "brain" who does well academically.

This locker room culture is largely responsible for another common cultural symbol—the harassed, endangered, victimized woman. For adolescent males, women are opportunities for conquest and experimentation. Tragically, this adolescent attitude is now widely characteristic of men of all ages; so much so that there are countless jokes about "dirty old men" who think and act like 14-year-olds in their relationships with women.

Fortunately there are signs of hope. In recent years thousands of men have recognized the inadequacy of these cultural symbols and have turned for help to seminars for men seeking to discover their true manhood. Some of these seminars represent little improvement, for they treat grown boys to the fantasy of a day in the woods with the guys, fighting make-believe wars in imaginary tree houses. But there are seminars, books and counseling that point men to a model of Christ-like maturity.

We must challenge this culture of adolescent male dominance, for we can already see some of its extreme consequences on television newscasts from around the world. The cameras bring us pictures from country after country of sinister, strutting adolescent males, armed with machine guns and defiance. Closer to home we hear chilling stories of gang initiations in which new members prove their worth to the gang by deliberate cruelty and murder.

There are societies in our world that understand that adolescence is a stage of life in which lasting values must be inculcated. In Thailand, for example, it was traditionally common for young men to be sent to a monastery for several years to learn both inner and outer discipline.

Unfortunately, in our culture and many others, for hundreds of years, young men have been sent into the army for training in the crafts of violence and intimidation to which they already seem so naturally inclined.

It's time for our culture to grow up. It's time for boys to stop being boys. It's time for boys to become men.

James Pankratz is president of Concord College, Winnipeg, and a member of McIvor Ave. Mennonite Brethren Church. Reprinted from Mennonite Brethren Herald, *Nov. 11, 1994.*

Giving can be for me, too.

How a non-Christian changed my mind about giving to panhandlers

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

It was about 10 p.m. on a Friday in San Francisco. My friend Jeff and I had stopped for a carry-out pizza to take back to the apartment for a late dinner. Having just arrived in the area known as "The Haight," I was taking in all the sights and sounds that San Francisco offers. The street was alive with noise and people, many of them holdover hippies from the 1960s, and many were living on the street.

On the way back to the apartment, we stopped at a little corner grocery to pick up something to drink. As I was paying for the items, an unkempt man walked up to us and said, "Hey, how about a piece of pizza?"

Even though I wasn't carrying the pizza, my first reaction was to say, "No way. Get out of here and leave us alone." But I wasn't in charge of the pizza, and I thought I knew how Jeff would respond: like I would.

Instead, Jeff opened the box of pizza and said, "Sure, help yourself."

The man reached in with his unwashed hands, took one slice of pizza, smiled broadly, and said, "Thanks, man."

All the way back I wondered why Jeff would give pizza to someone who was begging. After all, Jeff was street-smart, he lived in the city, he knew that giving to street people only encouraged them to ask for more, and of course I was also wondering if there would be enough pizza for me.

The next day as we were out in the neighborhood, we stopped for a couple of cups of coffee to go. As we walked down the street, a woman holding a Styrofoam cup with some change in it, called out to me, "Sir, can you spare a quarter?" No, I really couldn't, and besides, my hands were full—one held a hot cup of coffee, the other shopping bags from a day's activities. I was sure there would be no quarter anywhere, and money would only. …

She spotted Jeff several steps behind me but didn't ask him for money. Instead, she said, "How about some coffee?"

"But you don't have anyplace to put it," Jeff said.

"Oh, yes I do," the woman said. And with that she dumped the change into her pocket, blew the dirt from the bottom of the cup and held it out to him.

Jeff poured half his coffee into her cup, and we moved on.

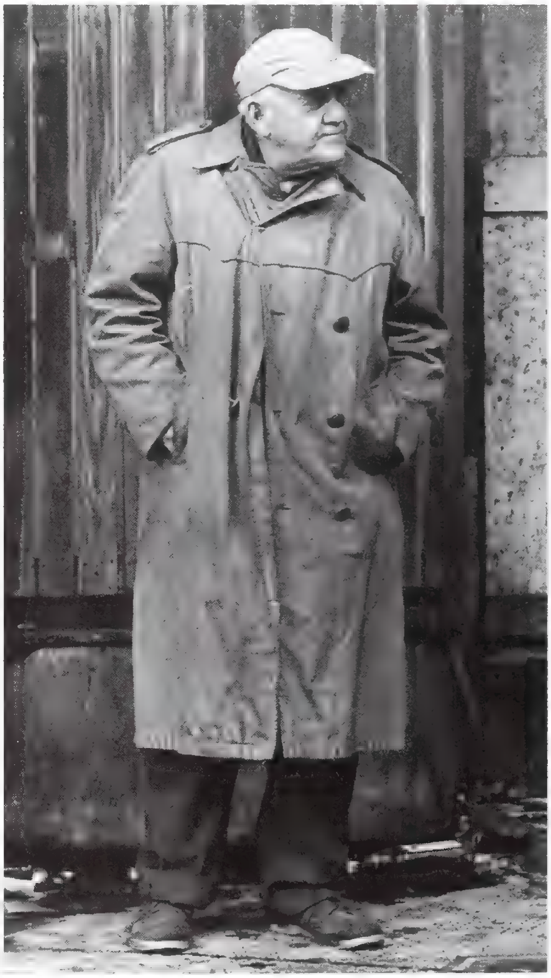
By now I was totally confused. Why would Jeff, who lives in the city, knows the problems of panhandlers and their impact on tourism, give first pizza and now coffee to someone on the street? Furthermore, Jeff wasn't even a practicing Christian. I doubt he remembers the admonition of Christ: Whoever gives a cup of hot coffee …

I asked Jeff why he gives food to people on the street. "You know that only encourages them to stay there and not get help," I told him. "Why do you do that for them, Jeff?"

"J.B., it makes me feel good to help people I know are hungry," he said. "Sure these people could be in shelters, but until they are, I like to do things that make me feel good, too. I don't just do it for them, I do it for me."

The experiences of that weekend have given me a different perspective. I no longer walk past every panhandler without giving that person something. I don't even have a policy as to when I give. Sometimes I just have a sense that I should help someone, and so I might give them a quarter or maybe even a dollar. As I've changed my practices, it becomes increasingly difficult to walk past everybody without looking at them, and increasingly it is difficult for me to drive past people who appear stranded on the highway.

The decision of when to help is arbitrary, but when I give, I don't just do it for them. I do it for me.



Rohn Engh

I no longer walk past every panhandler without giving that person something.

The gospel and excuses

A *study of* Romans 1:16-2:1

Jacob W. Elias

By the time he anticipated going to Rome and on to Spain, Paul's practice and teaching concerning the Jewish law had departed from the conservative norm. Paul had a lot of explaining to do to the church fathers in Jerusalem.

Some of this uneasiness was also felt in the churches in Rome. Some were Jewish, some Gentile, some likely integrated. From Romans 14:1–15:13 we learn that these technically diverse believers struggled to get along, especially with regard to Jewish tradition.

Paul needed to think carefully and prayerfully about Scripture and tradition, about revelation and personal experience. From this came the epistle of Romans.

Power and justice: In Romans 1:16-17 Paul sounds the keynote. What characterizes the gospel? God's power to save all who believe. The gospel also reveals the justice or righteousness of God. For much of the epistle, Paul develops the theme of God's power and justice made known in Jesus Christ crucified and raised.

However, as Paul in Romans 1:18 shows, the gospel also reveals another dimension of God's power and justice: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven."

Paul gives us a diagnosis of his world (1:18-31). Paul saw immorality, abuse, greed and human degradation, and he asked himself, "What has gone wrong here?"

Taking many of his cues from the Genesis story of creation and the fall, Paul identifies the root cause of this mess. Humanity has rejected God. Pondering humanity's rejection, Paul says, "They are without excuse" (1:20).

What has come of this rebellion? Paul spells out a threefold exchange. He says that people have made some bad trades. Three times Paul says, "They exchanged … ." Humanity traded the glory of God for images, the truth about God for a lie, and natural relations for unnatural (1:23-27).

What they gave in trade was precious. What did they get in return? "Therefore, God gave them up," to impurity, to degrading passions, to a debased mind and to things that should not be done (1:24-28).

Paul's letter was written to be read in Jewish, Gentile and integrated congregations in Rome. By this point in the letter we can envision that the Jewish listeners were sitting rather smugly. They were hearing Paul denounce the Gentiles and their sins, as traditionally viewed by Jews.

The climax of these self-satisfied expressions comes when Paul says, "They know God's decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die—yet they not only do them but even applaud others who practice them" (1:32).

Paul saw immorality, abuse, greed and human degradation, and he asked himself, "What has gone wrong here?"

But the shocker for the Jewish audience comes in the next sentence. Paul does not say, "Therefore they have no excuse." He says, "Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things" (2:1).

Like King David in the story from 2 Samuel 12, who recognized wickedness in others but not in himself, the judgmental hearers in Rome heard those words, "You are that man! You are that woman! In judging others you condemn yourselves."

What does Paul mean by his threefold refrain, "God gave them up … "?

Paul is not saying that God gave up on people. Then where would be God's power to save? Instead he says, "God gave them up." That shows God's justice. A just God does not force people to choose faithfulness.

Nor does a just and loving God protect people from the consequences of their choices. In his diagnosis, Paul takes the long view of history and says that God gave them up to those dynamics unleashed through centuries of unfortunate exchanges and bad choices.

God's wrath actually comes as part of God's justice. God created humanity in the image of God. This means that we have been given the freedom to defy the Creator. As Paul is quick to point out, such defiance expresses itself also in our sexuality.

A jealous God: God's wrath, therefore, comes out of God's compassion and justice. God lets people choose to rebel and to bear the consequences. These consequences are often passed on for generations: "I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and fourth generation of those who reject me" (Exodus 20:5).

Most parents know that one of the most difficult of all tasks is to grant their children the freedom to make mistakes and suffer the results. Divine wrath is part of God's parenting role.

God has not given up on any of us. But God has given us up to evil tendencies that express themselves in our relationships and behavior.

Paul identifies female and male homosexual activity as symptomatic of this human rebellion against God. Some ask whether Paul knowingly included committed monogamous and loving homosexual relationships on this list. Many of us would rather that Paul had left out some things: envy, covetousness, gossiping, haughtiness, rebellion toward parents, faithlessness. Is anyone among us not listed? Surely, there is no room for smugness or judgmental attitudes.

Why does Paul cite these symptoms of rebellion? To point to the cure. Both God's power and God's justice have been revealed in the gospel (1:16-17). This is the gospel of Jesus Christ. God gave him up for us all.

Jacob W. Elias is professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Profile

A gatherer of stories

A pastor turns the tables and interviews the interviewer.

David Bergen

*At the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta sessions in February 1994 I had the pleasure of meeting Carla Reimer. Carla had quoted me in an article she had written (*The Mennonite*, March 8, 1994). I decided at the conference that it might be interesting and fun to "turn the tables" and interview Carla for our church newsletter. Here, then, is the interview.*

"A journalist is a gatherer of stories," said Carla Reimer in an interview I conducted in February 1994.

Carla (who never has been interviewed before) has worked as a journalist and news service editor in the General Conference Mennonite Church since the summer of 1992. Earlier she taught journalism at Woodstock School in India and did public relations work for various institutions.

Carla's view of journalism as storytelling is unique. As a journalist, Carla enjoys hearing the stories of people, writing articles and the process of "putting it together." Not all is fun and games, however. Carla points out that journalism has its own frustrations—deadlines always leave insufficient time, and the language has the inherent inability to tell the whole story.

But are Mennonites and their stories interesting? In a certain sense, Carla says, Mennonites are predictable. The religious/church context limits the discussion, and Mennonite meetings and conferences "have a certain style about them." However, Carla says, "I'm constantly being surprised by what people tell me."

Carla sees the secular media as too focused on the negative. She believes part of the problem comes from an education system that concentrates too much on such negative topics as war. "I don't think people are even aware how much the media influence their lives."

Giving people a voice: *Carla Reimer*

Carla says that being a journalist in a religious context differs from a secular one. Ninety-nine percent of what she writes (an exaggeration by her own admission) involves writing about the good things that are happening in the church. What a General Conference journalist does is tell the story of what the church is up to. In a sense, journalism proclaims the good news of the work of God's kingdom.

'Hard things': Carla strongly believes that part of what kingdom work is all about is being a part of a community. This means each individual is in some way accountable to a community. "As a church we need to learn different ways to be accountable," says Carla. "We need to be willing to deal with the hard things."

It is in the area of "dealing with the hard things" that Mennonite media have received some criticism. However, Carla argues, Christianity is not about "closing your eyes." She believes that the General Conference allows its media and press to operate with freedom and openness.

In telling the stories she has gathered, Carla writes for "the person in the pew." She tries to write her stories in a way that is captivating, realizing that people are busy and that she herself often reads only part of an article or even just the headline.

Carla's primary goal in gathering stories and communicating them through journalism is that people's lives will be changed and that they will be moved to action. Carla relates a personal story of an interview she did with an older couple working in voluntary service. After the interview was published, Carla received a phone call that expressed how much it meant for this couple to have their story told.

"People like to have their stories told," says Carla. "My work can give a voice to people who do not have a voice."

David Bergen is pastor at First Mennonite Church, Calgary. This article first appeared in the congregation's newsletter.

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News

AMBS boards name interim president

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—Gerald Gerbrandt, academic dean at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, has been appointed interim president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary here for one year, beginning this summer.

His appointment came Jan. 30 from the boards that oversee AMBS.

Gerbrandt will assume the responsibilities of president now being held by Gayle Gerber Koontz, who became acting president when AMBS president Marlin E. Miller died Nov. 3, 1994.

James Longacre, pastor at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa., and vice chair of the AMBS board, says, "Gerald is very committed to the church and has a great love for the church. He is keenly interested in theological education and has ideas for creative approaches to it."

Gerbrandt

Gerbrandt, in addition to serving as dean for the three-year undergraduate Bible college for 13 years, is also associate professor of Bible. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Mennonite Biblical Seminary and a doctoral degree in Old Testament studies from Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.

During the current academic year he is on sabbatical, working on a commentary on Deuteronomy.

"For me this is, in a sense, a homecoming," Gerbrandt says, noting that he lived at AMBS with his parents in the early 1960s and then again as a student in the early 1970s. "I look forward to working with the larger North American Mennonite church," he says.

His experience and knowledge of North American theological education includes service with two inter-Mennonite organizations. He has served for the last six years as CMBC representative to the Theological and Pastoral Education Council and as chair of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, an inter-Mennonite project, since its beginning five years ago.

Gerbrandt and his wife, Esther, are the parents of three children, one a student at CMBC and two still at home. *Mary E. Klassen*

Leaders work at issue of homosexuality

Milford, Ind. (*Gospel Herald*)—What should happen when a congregation takes a position on homosexuality different from that of its area conference or the Mennonite Church?

That question brought together some 35 conference leaders and resource people to "learn from each other and be aware of God's Spirit among us as we talk." With those words Donella Clemens, moderator of the Mennonite Church (MC), opened a 24-hour consultation at Camp Alexander Mack here Jan. 6-7.

The meeting was called by the Mennonite Church General Board for conferences with congregations that have accepted practicing homosexuals as members. Because all these congregations have dual affiliation, representatives from the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) also attended.

Conference leaders talked freely of the pressures they face on the issue of homosexuality. On the one hand, some in the church fear conferences are about to expel congregations that disagree with them. Others see the church as weak and acquiescing to sin if conferences do not take a firm stand.

All agreed homosexuality is a difficult subject for them.

Said John Ruth from Franconia Conference (MC): "In 40 years of ministry, I have never heard as often and with the same tone: 'If you conference leaders don't do something about this, that's it!'

Continued on next page

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Educators build peace factory / p. 18

Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C., will host a Women in Ministry Conference May 26-28. The conference is sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee B.C. Women's Concerns. Guest speakers include Elizabeth Tapia, professor of theology at Union Theological Seminary, Dasmarinas, Philippines, and Susan Classen, author and long-term MCC worker. Workshops, a forum-theater and art displays will round out the event. Contact Miriam Ruiz, MCC B.C. Women's Concerns, Box 2038, Clearbrook, BC V2T 3T8, (604) 850-6639 or 857-0011.

• • •

Mennonite Disaster Service has been surveying flood-affected areas in California and hopes to establish an office and space to house volunteers. They plan to center MDS efforts in Guerneville, in Sonoma County, one of the hardest hit areas in northern California. Some 200 homes were destroyed and another 350 severely damaged in northern California's six most affected counties, reports MDS representative Gerald Klassen, of Burns Lake, B.C. Nearly 90 percent of these homes are in Sonoma County. People interested in volunteering for California flood cleanup should contact their MDS representative or phone MDS headquarters in Akron, Pa., at (717) 859-3889. Contributions for the northern California flood response are welcomed at MDS, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.

Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., will host its 10th summer Elderhostel program June 11-17 and Aug. 6-12. Elderhostel is a short-term educational experience for older adults. Contact Paul Penner, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6, (519) 885-0220, ext. 231.

* * *

In the United States 30 million people cannot afford to buy enough food to maintain good health, reports Tufts University Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy. More than a million Americans fell into poverty in 1993. In all, 39.3 million Americans—about 15 percent—live below the poverty level of $14,763 for a family of four. The center estimates that an expansion of federal food programs of less than $10 billion (1 percent of the federal budget) would quickly eliminate widespread hunger in the United States.

* * *

A Japanese university student who attended a Mennonite church was killed in the Kobe, Japan, earthquake of Jan. 17, reports *Mennonite Weekly Review*. The one General Conference (GC) and three Mennonite Brethren-related churches in the Kobe area sustained no major damage. The body of Watusu Mori, 22, a student at the University of Kobe, was discovered days after the quake. He attended Semboku Mennonite Brethren Church of Osaka, about 20 miles from Kobe, where his parents are long-time members. GC missionaries Etsuko and Russell Sawatsky, who live with their four children in Kobe, reported Jan. 17 that they were OK following the quake. GC missionary Peter Derksen, based in Fukuoka, Japan, said "the whole nation is responding with help and that is encouraging," noting that Mennonites have joined in the relief efforts. The GC Commission on Overseas Mission has allotted $5,000 for earthquake relief in Kobe. Mennonite Disaster Service, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Brethren Board of Missions and Services have also allotted funds for relief in Japan.

Naming options

Milford, Ind. (*Gospel Herald*)—What options do area conferences have for dealing with congregations that adopt practice different from the position of the denomination on homosexuality?

Conference leaders and resource people at the Jan. 6-7 consultation explored a range of options.

Some would end the relationship between conference and congregation:

- terminate a congregation's membership in conference,
- encourage congregations with a different practice on homosexuality to seek membership in another conference or denomination.

Other options would be more accepting of differing viewpoints:

- grant "associate member" status to groups with homosexual members,
- allow for homosexuals to be members but not leaders in congregations, conferences or the denomination,
- designate a small number of congregations in the denomination that would accept homosexuals as members ("congregations of refuge").

Several of the options would make the decision a congregation's:

- affirm the official position of the church but allow congregations to make the final decision,
- affirm the official position and choose to live "quietly" with the actual practice of congregations,
- allow congregational discretion but encourage no advocacy for a position different from the denomination,
- encourage each congregation to make an individual decision based on what is happening in the lives of its members.

Other options called for more time:

- establish a moratorium on discussion of the issue,
- set a period of time for both congregations and conferences to discern the Spirit's leading and then talk with each other about what they are hearing before any action is taken.

While conference leaders were divided on the feasibility of using many of these options, they did express appreciation for being helped to see beyond the "either-or" in dealing with this volatile issue.

"Many people are not too concerned about other slippages," Ruth continued. "But on homosexuality it's make or break."

Denominational statements: Discussion soon turned to polity and position statements. Both the General Conference Mennonite Church (Saskatoon '86) and the Mennonite Church (Purdue '87) have declared homosexual activity to be sin. "What is the role of these statements?" participants asked.

"General Assembly statements have the authority conferences attribute to them," MC General Secretary James M. Lapp said. "If conferences accept them as authoritative, they are."

Some conference leaders saw it a bit differently. Said Mary Burkholder, executive secretary of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, "I would have thought that when a statement is passed by General Assembly, it has authority for the life of the church."

"When there is division in the conference, then we appeal to the broader church statement," said Linford Martin, Allegheny Conference (MC) moderator.

"But we must admit we have our own internal controls," said Firman Gingerich, Iowa-Nebraska (MC) moderator. "If we agree with a statement, we'll certainly embrace it. If not, we might not be so fast to do so."

"Which describes the dilemma we're in on this issue," said Robert Hartzler, conference minister for the Northern District Conference (GC). "As individuals we make our own decisions. So does each congregation. The question is, How do we respect each other when we make different decisions?"

And how long dialogue? Consultation participants were also reminded that both the Saskatoon '86 and Purdue '87 statements call for dialogue with people with differing viewpoints on homosexuality.

But how long do we keep talking? several asked. Sally Schreiner of

Illinois noted that Hispanic and African-American congregations are particularly critical of the time spent on this issue when "our brothers are dying in the streets."

"Our congregations have tried to take outreach seriously," said Robert Yoder, also of Illinois. "So they become upset that we spend so much time on this."

Darrell Fast, General Conference moderator, noted, however, that 10 years is a "brief period" in the life of the church.

More options: Consultation participants also developed possible options for dealing with congregations that take opposing positions on homosexuality. They agreed the answers need not come as "either-or" in resolving the questions and the tensions (see box).

"How ready are conferences to live with each other if they choose to work on this issue in different ways?" Lapp asked.

No one answered that question—or many of the others posed during the meeting. However, most agreed they found help and new ideas in learning how others are working at the question.

MC moderator-elect Owen Burkholder led times of worship throughout the consultation, including spirited singing and intense prayer. He opened these sessions by challenging participants to "trust the Spirit to guide us through this issue too."

J. Lorne Peachey

Peacemakers arrested at Wisconsin base

Chicago (CPT)—Nine members of Christians Peacemaker Teams were arrested during a witness at the Extremely Low Frequency (ELF) project site in Clam Lake, Wis., Jan. 14.

From the project site, ELF transmitters send one-way commands to submerged nuclear-armed submarines worldwide.

Peacemakers, including CPT members and concerned local citizens, converged at the project site on the Martin Luther King holiday weekend to celebrate the works and words of Dr. King. Their action initiated a "Year of Nonviolence" against the Trident Submarine System, which U.S. Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin has called a "relic of the Cold War."

Following a gathering near the ELF compound for sharing of stories and a common meal, the 50 peacemakers continued past a no trespassing sign at the main gate toward the compound. Some individuals carried soup and a birthday cake honoring Dr. King for the guards and police officers inside. Others carried signs that read "Soup not Super Powers" and "Warfare Reform Now" while broadcasting a speech made by Dr. King.

"I came here today because I didn't want my 4-year-old daughter to grow up and say to me, 'You knew about this project, and you did nothing to stop it?'"

Kryss Chupp

In spite of initially being blocked by the police, 13 peacemakers continued past the police cars. Seven protesters, including five CPT members, scaled the interior fence around the compound to deliver soup and cake for the workers inside and were soon arrested.

Four CPTers and two Wisconsin residents involved in the continuing witness against ELF were arrested for refusing to move away from the front gate of the facility. More than 300 individuals have participated in public witnesses against ELF in recent years, many serving time in prison because of their witness.

The reasons given by participants for their witness include concern about nuclear weapons as well as concern about damage caused to surrounding plants, animals and humans by the electromagnetic radiation created by the ELF transmitters.

Kryss Chupp, associate trainer for CPT, said, "I came here today because I didn't want my 4-year-old daughter to grow up and say to me, 'You knew about this project, and you did nothing to stop it?'"

An arresting officer at the ELF site, Deputy Sheriff Ed Schlottke, has grown to respect the activists' efforts. As peacemakers approached the

Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center is hosting a Mediation Skills Training Institute for Educators June 21-23. The program will include training in how to equip student mediators and establish Conflict Manager Programs that can be used from as early as third grade through high school. Contact LMPC at 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148-3599, (708) 627-5310.

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and Camp Amigo, Sturgis, Mich., have teamed up to plan an event for rural pastors. AMBS will host an evening forum March 13, featuring Dr. Shannon Jung, director of the Center for Theology and Land/Rural Ministry Program at the University of Dubuque and Wartburg Theological Seminaries, who will speak on "Preparation for Rural Ministry." On March 14 Camp Amigo will hold its Pastors' Day, with sessions focusing on rural churches. Jung will serve as resource person for the day. Contact the camp at (616) 651-2811.

• • •

Anabaptist high school students can win up to $1,000 in an essay contest on "Using Money Responsibly." The contest is sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid and is open to high school students who attend an Anabaptist congregation or identify with the Anabaptist tradition. Eight prizes will be awarded, ranging from $1,000 to $500. Essays must be submitted between March 1 and May 12, and winners will be announced in July. Winners will be encouraged to tithe their prize money and invest in a worthy endeavor, such as future college expenses. For information contact MMA at (800) 348-7468.

Both United Airlines and American Airlines will grant a 5 percent discount to people attending Wichita '95, the joint convention of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, set for July 25-30. The discount is available through any travel agent. For United give contract number 590BI. For American mention star file S0175HZ.

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An urban training experience for ministers and laypeople will be held April 23-26 in San Antonio, Texas. Hosted by San Antonio Mennonite Church, Austin (Texas) Presbyterian Seminary and La Casa de Maria y Marta in San Antonio, the event will include input from community members working to alleviate suffering caused by gang violence, job relocation, homelessness and lack of health care. Contact Renetta Welty at La Casa de Maria y Marta, 602 Mission St., San Antonio, TX 78210, (210) 534-2064.

• • •

Hyde Park Mennonite Church, Boise, Idaho, spoke out last fall when Idaho was considering a piece of legislation, "Proposition One," that would ban legislation specifically protecting rights of homosexual people. A statement signed by 50 of the church's regular attenders ran in the *Idaho Statesman* Oct. 22, 1994. It read, in part, "Mennonites have a long tradition of peacemaking, compassion and nonviolence. Because of that tradition, we ... believe we are being called to speak out against Proposition One. While there is a diversity of conviction within our congregation, ... we are opposed to the passage of Proposition One because we believe that the repercussions of this initiative would not bear the fruit of the Spirit." The initiative was narrowly defeated in November 1994.

interior compound, the sheriff said, "We need more of you out here involved in these actions."

CPT members who were arrested included Cole Arendt, Washington; Duane Ediger, Dallas, Texas; Wes Hare, San Antonio, Texas; Esther Ho, Hayward, Calif.; Joanne Kaufman, Boulder, Colo.; K. Elayne King, Carlisle, Pa.; Wendy Lehman, Kidron, Ohio; Val Liveoak, San Antonio, and Randy Shank, Ephrata, Pa.

Other CPT members and coordinators present at the witness were Kryss Chupp, Chicago; Jeff Heie, Washington; Kathleen Kern, Rochester, N.Y.; Janice Long, Louisville, Ohio; Rey Lopez, Chicago; Tom Malthaner, Rochester, N.Y.; Hedy Sawadsky, Vineland, Ont.; Lena Siegers, Hamilton, Ont., and Joshua Yoder, Elkhart, Ind.

$3.8 million will nurture MEDA work in Russia

Winnipeg (MEDA)—The Canadian government has approved a grant of $3.8 million (Cdn.) to expand the Russia program of Mennonite Economic Development Associates.

The grant, from the Canadian Department of External Affairs, will enable MEDA to develop a business incubator and credit program in Zelenograd, just outside Moscow.

MEDA has worked with the evolving Russian business environment since 1990 and has been trying to meet the needs of small and micro-businesses in a variety of ways. "Lack of credit and space are key obstacles listed by emerging Russian entrepreneurs," says Christopher Shore, manager of MEDA's Russia program.

Incubator: The business incubator will be set up to lease space to up to 30 businesses at one time for a period of up to three years. Rent will be subsidized at first, reaching market rates sometime after two years.

Another component of the grant is $1 million in capital for MEDA's credit program. The project will experiment with new forms of credit delivery mechanisms, including leasing companies, credit unions or cooperative banks.

The grant also includes further support for the management training component offered through MEDA's partner agency, the Association of Christians in Business.

By applying its Small Business Development Program methodology to the project, MEDA expects not only to strengthen businesses, build assets and create jobs, but also develop a sustainable credit institution oriented to the support of local businesses.

Mission exec sees hope in South Africa

Elkhart, Ind.—In his first visit to his native South Africa since last April's first wholly democratic elections, the Mennonite Church's top mission executive saw "the sunshine of hope that you can have a society that will not be governed by fear and hostility and bitterness."

The atmosphere remained free of the tensions Stanley W. Green, president of Mennonite Board of Missions, had previously experienced in South Africa.

"It was a sacred moment to step off the plane in Cape Town with the realization that a whole new reality had been birthed in South Africa. It was not the same country that I had left," Green said of his December 1994 visit to the African continent. "[There were new] opportunities that before had been denied because of skin pigmentation. ... I was able to go with friends to visit a number of places without feeling I was flouting existing laws or feeling my presence was called into question."

That atmosphere, however, provided a contrast for what Green now witnesses in North America. Green, who has been called "an overseas missionary to North America," sees American Christians giving in to the despair, bitterness and cynicism many South Africans have overcome.

"The religious environment is different in South Africa. For the church to speak in the public arena is expected. It has not lost its moral credibility and its spiritual authority because the church was cast in a role where it had to speak the prophetic word of God to a political system that flouted the righteousness of God," he said. "By contrast, in North America the church has lost its very authority and its voice in the public square."

Green's comments may puzzle some observers. They came days after the Republican Party took control of the U.S. Congress for the first time in more than 40 years. That change came from an election in which the Christian Coalition and other groups were credited for impacting the election's outcome. But Green said the church's role in the political realm represents something different from getting your candidates into office.

"[The church in North America] still retains the ability to influence the way parts of its constituency will vote, but often it is defined in very narrowly partisan terms," he said. "Politics—or political interests and sympathies—seem to be driving the choices that Christians or other people in the religious arena are making, rather than Christians speaking truth to politics and calling for an agenda that represents a prophetic challenge to the political system of our time."

Green doesn't see from the church in America today the same kind of challenge that civil-rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. represented in the 1950s and 1960s. Even more, the former pastor sees little eagerness or concern by Christians about efforts to bring people of different races or denominations together.

"It was a sacred moment to step off the plane in Cape Town with the realization that a whole new reality had been birthed in South Africa. It was not the same country that I had left."

Stanley Green

"We have somehow become cynical and allowed ourselves to feel complacent with a church that is so divided. The church has allowed itself to be captive and is not speaking with an alternative voice," said Green, who is a doctoral candidate in missiology at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif. "This surrender to cynicism represents a denial of the dream that Martin Luther King Jr. cherished and championed."

Despite the ugliness King and others encountered, they still saw "seeds of hope … that could make this nation a place where it would not be governed by greed, xenophobia and fear," according to Green.

"Unfortunately, we are at a very different place than I believe Martin Luther King would have hoped we could be," he said. "It's a travesty of that dream that North America at the end of the 20th century seems to have allowed itself to have succumbed to cynicism, fear and despair." *Tom Price*

A new generation wants new ways of doing mission

Elkhart, Ind.—More than a century after Christians pooled local resources to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth, a new generation of Mennonites may want to reverse the direction.

Working through local congregations, they want to do mission in their own communities as well as overseas. And they want support—including training, consultation and funding—to come from cash-strapped national mission organizations.

Officials at Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) here heard that message Jan. 9 from a six-month study as a research team presented the results of the Cana Venture project, which sought to hear the missionary vision of baby boomers and Generation X.

As one respondent put it, "MBM is doing its thing and wanting people to support that. I want MBM to help me do my thing."

The mission board heard some 800 Mennonites—235 in 35 focus groups and 565 by questionnaire—also express strong support for short-term mission projects and voluntary service, particularly for youth, peace and mediation work and training to nurture Christian spirituality.

"The thing we heard most strongly in the focus groups was that MBM should turn its attention to supporting, training, resourcing in efforts with local congregations in North America," said Norman Shawchuck, president of Shawchuck and Associates, a Leith, N.D., firm that designed the study. "[The message is] whatever you are doing overseas is good, keep doing it. While you're doing what

Continued on next page

The 13th Mennonite Central Committee Central States meeting will be held Feb. 25 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa. John A. Lapp, MCC executive secretary, will be the keynote speaker.

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., will hold its Seminary Sampler March 5-6. Those considering study at the school can meet students and faculty, sit in on classes and explore financial aid and degree options and other concerns. Call the seminary at (800) 964-2627.

• • •

Goshen (Ind.) College will be part of a project aimed at finding ways to develop leadership in all members of the college community, rather than an "elite few." Goshen and four other private liberal arts colleges were chosen by the Kettering Foundation, an Ohio organization that works to foster leadership to improve civic life.

• • •

"We have suffered the loss of sacredness to materialism, but it is time to value diversity as God's artistry. How we relate to each other is how we relate to God," Joseph Echols Lowery told Bluffton (Ohio) College students in an address in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 10. Lowery co-founded with King the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957 to coordinate local organizations working for racial equality. He served as SCLC's vice president for 10 years, then became chairman of the national board of directors. In 1977 he became the SCLC's third president. Speaking of King, Lowery said, "We must be careful not to resurrect the messenger and bury the message in sentimental irrelevancy. … It's not about the man but also the nation, the struggle and the unsung heroes of that struggle."

Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church was born Jan. 8, merging the two previous Mennonite congregations in Lima, First Mennonite Church (GC) and Northside Mennonite Church (MC). The new congregation will apply for dual membership in the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

• • •

Three denominations will become partners with the Andrew Center, Elgin, Ill., March 1: the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Church of the Brethren and the Mennonite Church. The center offers consultation on questions of evangelism. Individual congregations that are part of member denominations receive a discounted membership rate from the center. The Andrew Center was begun in 1994 by the Church of the Brethren.

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South Korea is now the world's largest exporter of Bibles. According to the Canadian Bible Society, South Korea printed 7.7 million Bibles and New Testaments, exporting 4.7 million in 350 languages for use in 103 countries in 1993. That is almost one-quarter of the total worldwide production for the United Bible Societies. The exported Bibles are printed on paper produced in Japan from Canadian pulp. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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A Notre Dame sociologist believes fewer Americans attend church than most studies suggest. Public opinion polls have consistently shown that nearly half of all Americans are in church on any given Sunday. A 1991 Gallup Poll reported that about 50 percent of Catholics and 40 percent of Protestants regularly attend worship services. But the *Elkhart* (Ind.) *Truth* reports that Mark Chave, in a 1993 study, said that in fact only about 20 percent of Protestants and 28 percent of Catholics attend. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

you're doing overseas, do more—much, much more—in North America."

"We don't see this with other churches, but your people say, 'We want to be involved in mission.' In most denominations, this never comes up—they don't want to give any more money to mission and they don't want to be involved. You could have a tremendous mission future, I'm convinced of that," Shawchuck said. "Finding them and utilizing them will not be easy." *Tom Price*

Interactive peace museum takes shape

Kidron, Ohio (*Gospel Herald*)—Picture a 40 foot by 40 foot interactive museum with hands-on exhibits about peacemaking filled with people exploring faith issues. This is Peace Factory, the brainchild of a group of Mennonite educators who are now working to bring the dream to reality.

Heading up the project is peace educator Susan Mark Landis of the Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church. She explains how the idea evolved since the 1993 Mennonite Church gathering in Philadelphia.

There she staffed a display on congregational peace education for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries. The display included some origami paper and directions for folding peace cranes. And they kept running out of materials.

> **"Peacemaking is not limited to not being a soldier."**
>
> ***Susan Mark Landis***

"People wanted to do more than pick up handouts," Landis says. "They wanted something more experiential ... and education experts say this is what sticks better longer."

Subsequent brainstorming sessions on a project for Wichita '95 focused on how to teach people about peacemaking. Several themes for learning emerged:

- what the Bible says about dealing with violence,
- skills for resolving conflict,
- how to share peacemaking skills

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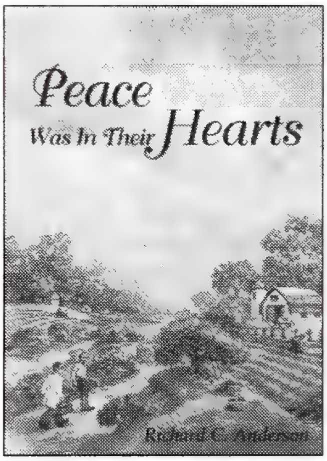
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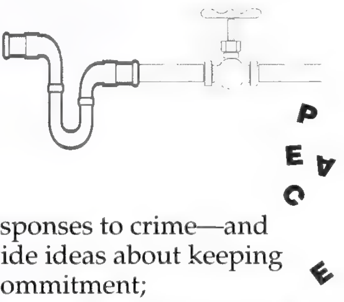
What is Peace Factory?



Kidron, Ohio (*Gospel Herald*)—Because educators believe people learn best by interacting, Peace Factory will offer a hands-on approach. Tools for learning include the following:

- role plays of typical conflicts to teach skills for everyday clashes;
- a walk-through series of peace concepts, relevant Bible verses and thought-provoking situations to encourage adult discussion about how to apply the Bible in daily life (A scenario might be followed with a book where participants can write down their ideas and read the reactions of other people who came before them.);
- Next Step panels to invite adults to a new commitment in specific areas of peacemaking—such as dealing with white privilege, taxes or responses to crime—and provide ideas about keeping the commitment;
- children's activities for all ages on subject matter such as war toys;
- youth computer program (One program possibility would determine the user's style of conflict management.);
- Peacemaker's Gallery of photographs and stories of those who have said no to violence;
- peace education handouts for families and congregations;
- live storytelling and singing.

Cathleen Hockman

with local communities.

"Part of the basic idea [of the Peace Factory project] has to do with broadening people's ideas about peacemaking," Landis says.

She describes speaking in congregations about peace: "And when it's time for questions, the first one is 'What's happening with the draft?' It's like the main thing about peace is that our men are not making war. There's much more to peacemaking than that. Peacemaking is not limited to not being a soldier."

After Wichita '95, the display will be available for shipping to area conference meetings and other gatherings. Eventually planners would like to see the Peace Factory housed in a Mennonite heritage center.

Landis serves on the Mennonite Church's Peace and Justice Committee, which is providing a one-day-a-week honorarium for her work on the project.

Other sponsors include the General Conference Mennonite Church's Commission on Home Ministries, Mennonite Central Committee, Christian Peacemaker Teams, New Call to Peacemaking and the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund.

Many professionals have volunteered their skills toward the project. For example, Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, Va.) and Goshen (Ind.) College professors have offered expertise with biblical background and children's education. Mennonite Publishing House graphic designers are volunteering their time.

Peace Factory still needs volunteers and funds. While donations have nearly matched a $5,000 (U.S.) grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid, the total cost comes to $43,000. *Cathleen Hockman*

We pray that
your love
will be shared
without hesitation
and without pretense;
that you will simply
and sincerely prefer
good to evil.

COME JOIN US!
Mennonite Voluntary Service options are listed on page 20.

There are over 400 megachurches (churches with over 2,000 worshipers) in the United States, reports *Youthworker Update*. It reports that another church reaches that size every three weeks. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

● ● ●

Bluffton (Ohio) College has changed the name of its home economics department to Family and Consumer Sciences. "We are increasingly aware that we must educate our students in ways that empower them for their work as professionals prepared to impact the development, delivery and evaluation of consumer goods and services for their role in supporting and strengthening family units within society," says department chair Barbara Stettler. "Clearly, the balance between work and family life is becoming increasingly more complex and critical to a healthy society. The department offers five majors: child development; clothing, textiles and merchandising; food and nutrition; general home economics and home economics education.

● ● ●

In the 14 years since her retirement, Billie Harris has completed 1,300 doll blankets and more than 450 adult bed quilts for homeless people. The member of Pueblo (Colo.) Mennonite Church had been making quilts to sell before she retired. So when asked by a local charity, Harris began making a few for the homeless. Then a few more. And the material started pouring in. Esther Bowman in the *Rocky Mountain Conference Echo* writes that people brought sacks of leftover cloth and used clothing that still had usable material in it. Heirs dropped off goods found when estates were settled. Now strangers leave bags of cloth on Harris' doorstep. On one occasion a man brought three boxes—each large enough to hold a 30-gallon water heater—packed with almost new tuxedos. Harris says she will continue her ministry of sewing as long as she is able. (*Gospel Herald*)

Record

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., will hold summer school sessions in June, July and August. Two-week classes on a variety of subjects will be offered. Contact the seminary at (800) 964-2627 or (219) 295-3726.

* * *

Mission Partner churches in Canada gave $500 for a Christmastime supplement of groceries for Moscow pensioners vulnerable to petty crime and discouraged by the changes around them. Arranged through General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Central Committee staff in Moscow, the project distributed some 1,500 Christmas packages of grocery items.

* * *

The United States is having a hard time convincing Southeast Asian allies to host the U.S. Navy, reports *Eastern Express*. Although Vietnam has proposed a U.S. return to Cam Ranh Bay, both Thailand and Indonesia coolly rebuffed U.S. advances during President Bill Clinton's visit last fall. Analysts say the rejections reflect a growing sentiment that U.S. presence in the region should be more diplomatic and less militaristic. Singapore has offered logistical support for American warships, homeless in Asia since the closure of the Subic Bay base in the Philippines. (*World Press Review*)

* * *

The Seniors for Peace British Columbia chapter is planning a celebration of 50 years since the end of alternative service work during World War II. The celebration, planned for Aug. 11-15, will include harvesting trees planted by conscientious objectors, symbolic tree planting and the erection of historic markers on Vancouver Island. The celebration is for all who were ambassadors for peace in the alternative services. Contact A.J. Klassen, 1941 Valencia Court, Clearbrook, BC V2T 4M1.

DEATHS

Sonwani

Amritius Sonwani, Champa, India, died Jan. 10 at age 67. He taught Hindi to General Conference missionaries in the 1940s. After becoming a nurse he joined Sewa Bhawan Hospital in Jagdeeshpur, where he served as nursing superintendent from 1969 to 1983.

J. Lloyd Spaulding, North Newton, Kan., died Jan. 12 at age 80. He had been professor of economics at Bethel College, North Newton, for 35 years.

Lotus Troyer, Chenoa, Ill., died Dec. 19, 1994, at age 79. He had served as pastor in Summerfield, Carlock, Flanagan and Meadows, Ill., and at Oak Grove Church in Smithville, Ohio.

MINISTERS

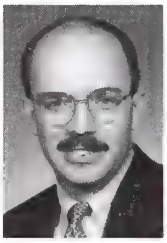
Ken Dueck is assistant pastor at Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask.

Richard Kinson was installed Jan. 15 as pastor at Grace Church, Enid, Okla.

Steve Yoder was installed Jan. 8 as associate pastor at Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan.

WORKERS

Barth Hague, Goshen, Ind., was named vice president for marketing sevices for Mennonite Mutual Aid in Goshen. He had served as director of corporate communications since 1987.


Hague

Vincent

Mark Vincent will begin May 1 as director of a joint stewardship education project of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Mennonite Mutual Aid.

Program coordinator/care provider, full-time salaried position available at **Agape Respite Care**, Berne, Ind. Administrative tasks and care-giving for people with disabilities. Training provided.

Send résumé or call **Roberta Lehman, Agape Respite Care, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; (219) 589-3351**.

Mennonite Voluntary Service needs your gifts and abilities!

Present openings include:
- **Community Liaison Worker** in Riverton, Man.;
- **Women's Shelter Worker** in Kansas City, Kan.;
- **Bookkeeper** in Dallas, Texas.

Many other North American assignments available as well.

Must be committed to Christian faith, peace, justice and community living.

Benefits: room and board, health care, adventure, community and more!

Contact:
Mennonite Voluntary Service
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114

316/283-5100

Brethren Home and Cross Keys Village, a CCRC located in New Oxford, Pa., is seeking applicants for the position of **president**. The 200-acre campus of the Brethren Home, with 850 residents, is located in southcentral Pennsylvania. The candidate should be a licensed nursing home administrator or eligible to be licensed, demonstrate proven managerial skills, relate well to residents, staff, board and community. Must be able to nurture a Christian atmosphere and have an appreciation for the beliefs of the Church of the Brethren.

If you meet these qualifications, please send your résumé to **Presidential Search, P.O. Box 3625, York, PA 17402.**

Winter conference for business professionals and entrepreneurs will be held in Phoenix March 16-20. The General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring events that include fellowship, learning, golf and food! You'll learn to know how others in business handle success and problems. Participants will share how a relationship with the church can help in business and how your leadership can enhance your church and conference.

Call or write **Gary Franz** for a brochure: **(316) 283-5100** or **General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347**.

Mennonite Aid Plan of the Pacific Coast (a fire and casualty company), is looking for a dynamic **general manager** with experience in marketing, knowledge of reinsurance, industry reporting requirements and ability to motivate people. Résumés accepted until March 31. Position will be filled prior to June 1. Offices located in Reedley, Calif., serving five Western states. Qualifications and job description available upon request. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience and education.

Reply to **Vern Warkentin, 18685 E. Floral Ave., Reedley, CA 93654**.

Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., requires a full-time **associate pastor for pastoral care and Christian education**. Primary responsibilities include leadership in Christian education, teaching and enabling laity in doing pastoral care, visitation and counseling, involvement in worship and some preaching. Applicants should have M.Div. or equivalent. Pastoral experience is preferred. Bethel Mennonite Church is an urban congregation of approximately 575 members with three pastors on the pastoral team.

Send résumés and references **by March 15** to **Irma Fast Dueck, Associate Pastor Search Committee, Bethel Mennonite Church, 870 Carter Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3M 2E2; fax (204) 453-3952**.

Goshen College seeks faculty for a full-time, continuing position in **accounting**. Responsibilities include teaching lower- and upper-level accounting courses, relating to local accounting and business firms and, where needed, teaching microcomputer applications courses. CPA and accounting experience expected, master's degree expected, with preference given to applicants with doctorate or master's in accounting. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send résumé and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. Applications will be received until the position is filled. If you have further questions, call John Nyce at (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.

Goshen College seeks faculty for a full-time position as **director of international education**. Responsibilities include administering the college's overseas study-service program, supervising faculty and students who participate in the program and developing the international-education curriculum and orientation. Qualifications include experience in program development in cross-cultural settings, Ph.D. in an academic area or international education preferred, commitment to experiential learning, second-language ability and management skills. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Interviews will begin March 1 and continue until the position is filled. Responsibilities begin July 1. Send résumé and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**.

Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba invites applications for the half-time position of **director of young adult ministries**.

General responsibilities: To serve as a resource person working in planning events, encouraging the development of various networks, strengthening young adult leadership in the conference and its 51 congregations in coordination with the director of youth ministries and the Educational Ministries Commission.

Requirements:
- commitment to the Christian faith
- interest in and commitment to young adult ministries
- theological training and/or experience in Anabaptist settings
- pastoral experience is beneficial
- good initiative, communicative and organizational skills

Duties to commence early summer. CMM salary and benefit guidelines apply.

Please direct applications (résumé and references) or inquiries **by March 15** to: **Youth Adult Ministries Search Committee, c/o Henry Loewen, Executive Secretary, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1; (204) 896-1616; fax (204) 831-5675**.

Crime! A Christian response? Start a church-based Victim Offender Reconciliation Program in your area. Training at the Fresno, Calif., VORP with Ron Claassen, March 29-31. **Call 1-800-909-VORP**.

Bethel College is seeking candidates for three tenure-track faculty positions beginning in August: **mathematics, physical chemistry** and **Spanish**. Ph.D. required for all positions. Commitment to undergraduate teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration and Bethel's mission as a church-related college are essential; familiarity with disciplinary software and network applications desired. Qualifications and experience will be considered for salary and rank.

Complete job descriptions are available from the academic dean's office. Applications should include résumé, three letters of reference and recent graduate school transcript of applicable. Consideration will begin Feb. 15 and continue until positions are filled.

Materials should be sent to: **Wynn M. Goering, Academic Dean, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th St., North Newton, KS 67117**. Bethel is an equal opportunity employer, and especially encourages women and minorities to apply.

Training and Development Coordinator at **Eastern Mennonite University**; 12-month, full-time position, beginning Oct. 1. Master's degree required, Ph.D. preferred. The qualified candidate will have experience in teaching, use of technology in education and administrative skills. Expertise in using computers, including for academic instruction and the Internet. This position is funded for four years by a Title III grant from the U.S. Department of Education. There are no special physical requirements. Minorities especially encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact **EMU Human Resources Office at (703) 432-4108**. Application deadline is **May 1**.

Spruce Lake Retreat, a Mennonite retreat center and camp in northeastern Pennsylvania, has two positions open:
- **Maintenance assistant**—year-round, salaried position beginning as soon as possible
- **General assistant**—year-round, salaried position combining waitressing, housekeeping and some kitchen work or dishwashing, depending on ability and interest; beginning as soon as possible

Contact **Paul Beiler, RR #1, Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; (717) 595-7505**.

Mennonite educators in public and private schools . . . *mark your calendars!*

A conference for Mennonite educators in elementary and secondary schools will be held July 24-25 in Wichita, Kans., prior to Wichita '95. The conference will bring together church and public school educators across grade levels and curriculum areas from the U.S. and Canada to address mutual interests and concerns.

Featured speakers: John Toews, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif.; Mike Yaconelli, youth culture specialist from Yreka, Calif.; Ruth Naylor, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio; and Gerald Gerbrandt, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man.

Registration materials have been mailed to all MC and GC congregations. Check with your church office if you do not receive a registration form. If you have questions, contact

Mennonite Educators Conference
Box 1142
Elkhart IN 46515-1142
(219 294-7523)

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Reviews

VIDEO

PACE PARABLES

Speed *and* **Little Buddha**

Reviewed by Mark D. Stucky, Elkhart, Ind.

Last summer provided moviegoers two parables of contemporary life. Both parables recently came to video stores.

In the mindless action/adventure category, *Speed* was one of last year's best. Theatrical release earned $300 million worldwide, and video sales and rentals may surpass that figure.

Speed focuses on a police officer (Keanu Reeves) trying to save passengers on a bus from a bomb planted by a vengeful man (Dennis Hopper). The bomb armed itself when the bus first traveled faster than 50 miles per hour and is set to explode when the bus slows to below 50. Because the bus can't slow down without dreadful results, the plucky driver (Sandra Bullock) must desperately careen around obstacles at a perilous pace.

Speed is a parable of many lives. Our frenetic routines encounter stomach-churning stresses and new hazards at every turn. Although life is over-accelerated, we're afraid to slow down. We feel our lives rushing much too quickly but can't stop because we fear the consequences even more.

Can we find an alternative? The star of *Speed*, Keanu Reeves, who was until last summer best-known for portraying the dimwitted dude in *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*, also starred in *Little Buddha*, last summer's spiritual alternative to *Speed*.

Little Buddha is two movies in one. Present-day Tibetan Buddhist monks believe a spiritual teacher may have been reincarnated in a small boy living in Seattle. To describe the importance of this possibility to the boy and his skeptical parents they tell the story of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha.

Too fast: *Reeves and Bullock in* Speed

Richard Foreman (Newsweek)

In extended flashbacks, Reeves plays the sixth-century B.C. Buddha born to a lavish life who renounces his kingly father's legacy and becomes an ascetic until he finds the enlightenment of the "middle way."

Spirituality has always been difficult to portray authentically in cinema, a medium that excels in sound, surfaces and special effects. Only an exceptional movie can meet such a challenge. *Little Buddha* is, unfortunately, only mediocre. It fails to make its message authentic or attractive.

The pace of the movie is meditative—but also detached and boring. The yin to *Speed*'s yang, *Little Buddha* should be nicknamed "Slow."

Little Buddha was swift only in how quickly it arrived and departed theaters last summer. Many of those inclined to see it missed the opportunity. Now that *Little Buddha* is out in video, people get a second chance to see it—and be disappointed.

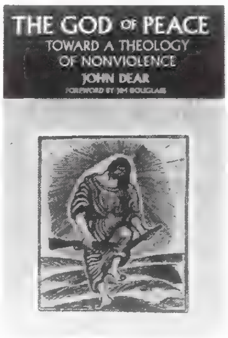
As parables, *Speed* and *Little Buddha* reflect many people's yearning for an alternative to frantic lifestyles. The cinematic portrayal of an authentic spiritual quest will have to wait for some other film.

BOOKS

A GOD MORE THAN PEACEFUL

The God of Peace: Toward a Theology of Nonviolence *by John Dear (Orbis Books, 1994)*

Reviewed by David Janzen, Evanston, Ill.



This book attempts to examine systematically all major areas of theology from the perspective of Christian nonviolence. Dear's foremost models of nonviolence are Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King Jr., Archbishop Oscar Romero and Gandhi, who, though not claiming to be Christian, demonstrated how the Sermon on the Mount can be applied to social and

TULIP TIME IN HOLLAND
April 18 to May 1, 1995

Our Dutch Mennonite tour leaders, Pieter and Martha Gotwals Postma, will welcome you at the height of the spring flower season. By boat, bike (if you like) and motorcoach, they will introduce you to their homeland, from the Delta to Friesland.

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Vienna: Music & Culture	May 30 - June 13	Wilbur Maust
European Health Care	July 3-18	Joseph G. Landis & Aldred Neufeldt
European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5-21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10-26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes

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political issues that Christians have long neglected.

As a theological experiment the book yields some useful contributions. For instance, in the chapter on salvation ("A Soteriology of Nonviolence") he writes, "Jesus saves us from the sin of violence which is killing us all; from the laws which legalize injustice, torture, execution and nuclear weapons; and from the reign of death which fills every human being with fear."

Since our eternal survival is guaranteed, "We can follow the risen Christ along the way of nonviolence by risking our lives in resistance to systemic violence." The author knows what he is writing about, and his challenge to a comfortable and privileged North American church has power.

Other chapters of the book are repetitious, with litanies of the horrors of 20th-century violence. I found the author too much in love with his favorite word, "nonviolence." Of course Jesus was a radical and nonviolent, but "nonviolence" is not a good one-word summary of his ministry and gospel. Dear's expression "the God of nonviolence" sometimes twists the identity of God to his own purposes.

Despite some dull sections, I found something uniquely like the early church in this book and in the author's witness. Like the early Christians, the author and his cohorts are powerless to topple the sinful systems that control our age. But their words and actions shake the seats of power because they are saying, "Jesus is Lord, and you are not. The reign of God has begun. The state has no future because it is based on violence and the fear of death. Jesus has won the victory. We are free to live the kingdom now."

Resources

• • ▼

- **Praying the Lord's Prayer** by Glaphré (Faith & Life Press, 1995, $9.95 U.S./$12.95 Cdn.) is the latest installment in the Fast Lane Bible Studies series for junior-high age youth. Call toll-free (800) 743-2484 (U.S. and Canada).
- **Creative Crusader: Edmund G. Kaufman and Mennonite Community** by James C. Juhnke (Bethel College, 1994, $15 U.S. paper/$30 U.S. hardcover) presents the story of Kaufman: missionary to China, college president and denominational leader.
- **Essays in Anabaptist Theology**, edited by H. Wayne Pipkin (Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1994, $15 U.S. plus $3 handling) contains 12 essays plus an annotated bibliography on Anabaptist theology. Order from Institute of Mennonite Studies, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.
- **Proceedings of the Conference Tradition and Transition: An Amish Mennonite Heritage of Obedience, 1693-1993** (Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society) is a collection of papers from a conference exploring Amish history and contributions to modern Mennonite denominations. Available for $11.35 U.S. ($11.98 for Illinois residents) from Gordon Oyer, 110 Flora Drive, Champaign, IL 61821.
- **Connections** is a 17-minute video of the African-American Mennonite Association's 1994 tour to Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. Available for free loan from Mennonite Central Committee, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151; or MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381; or from your nearest MCC office. Also available is **Natural Connections**, a 58-page booklet of faith stories from African and African-American Christians, free of charge from MCC offices.
- **Spanish-language ads** are available from MBM Media Ministries for outreach to Spanish-speaking people. Also available are four Spanish-language booklets on using media. Contact Rafael Barahona, Hispanic Mennonite Convention, 421 S. Second St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516, (219) 294-7131.
- **Ads designed for those searching for meaning in life** are available from MBM Media Ministries. For an informational flyer call 1-800-999-3534.
- **The Ministry of the Spirit** by David Schroeder, pamphlet published by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's Council on Faith and Life, studies the Bible's teachings on the Holy Spirit. To order in Canada call toll-free (800) 665-1954; or call (204) 888-6781. Ten copies for $5 Cdn.
- **Peace Was in Their Hearts: Conscientious Objectors in World War II** by Richard C. Anderson (Correlan Publications, 1995, $17.95 paper/$28.50 hardcover U.S.) tells the story of the establishment and experience of alternative service through the memories of 1,000 COs who served in Civilian Public Service during World War II.

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Lands of the Bible	May 9 - 22	Ken & Kass Seitz
European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5 - 21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10 - 26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes
England/Scotland	August 9 - 24	Wilmer Martin & Mary Rittenhouse Schwartrzentruber
Mexico	Nov. 15 - 30	Cal Redekop

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Editorial

A saint among us

While our society talks and sings about "love" as some romantic notion that will live forever but in reality rarely lasts more than a few years, the Bible presents a different view of love. The apostle Paul calls it a "more excellent way" (1 Corinthians 12:31).

Love, as conceived in the Bible, is not so much a feeling as it is the active faithfulness to a contract. Our example is God's love, a love that does not seek dominance over another nor is conditional on another's goodness. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul calls this love patient and kind. It is not envious, boastful, arrogant, rude, irritable or resentful (verses 4-5). Love, he concludes, "never ends" (verse 8).

This is all nice in theory, but living it out is hard work and often has to be done without feeling particularly loving. Uncle Jesse (see page 3) must have felt devastated by Lydia's rejection of him, even if it did come out of her mental illness. Yet he felt bound by a contract he had made to love her, no matter what. Again, this may be easy to talk about, but to be faithful in such circumstances is difficult to imagine. Our faithfulness depends on the power of God's Spirit.

> **Our love must be concrete, applied to whatever situation we find ourselves in. It helps us to see that love displayed in real life, by people we know.**

Jesus calls us to love God and our neighbor, but he also shows us how that may be lived out. Our love must be concrete, applied to whatever situation in which we find ourselves. It helps us to see that love displayed in real life, by people we know.

Jerry Keiper, a member of my congregation who had been living in Champaign, Ill., was an example to me of such love. On Jan. 18 he was struck by a car, thrown from his bicycle and killed.

Jerry, who was two months younger than I, was a quiet man who lived out his beliefs more faithfully than anyone I know. A brilliant mathematician who helped develop Mathematica, a computer program used by more than a million people, he chose to live modestly. He established the Michael and Margarethe Sattler Foundation to distribute his royalties from Mathematica to people in need. He thus kept his income below the taxable level in order not to contribute tax money to the military.

Spiritual sickness: Jerry never owned a car, grew as much of his own food as he could, wore his clothes until they were worn out, kept his thermostat so low in winter that you needed a coat when you visited. He was one of the rare people in our culture who sought to consume less from the earth than what they gave. His life spoke loudly against what may be our deepest spiritual sickness, consumerism.

Yet he rarely talked about it. He rarely talked at all. He did express his views via e-mail on MennoLink. Recently he wrote, "I live the way I do with the commitments I make because it is the only way to be true to myself."

His life confronted me with my own entrapment in consumerism, yet I never felt condemned by Jerry. I always felt his acceptance. Love is kind; love is patient.

While I consider Jerry a saint among us, he was not perfect. He had his own shortcomings, had difficulty expressing affection. He grieved his own failed marriage. At times he seemed bewildered by the emotional life.

A song he often asked our congregation to sing was "Will You Let Me Be Your Servant?" (*Hymnal* #307). The song expressed not only his desire but who he was. He was one you could always depend on to offer a helping hand. His simplicity was never for show but a genuine demonstration of his love for God's creation and God's people.

Such genuine, concrete love makes one vulnerable, as vulnerable as a bicycle in the path of an onrushing car. But "love is strong as death" (Song of Solomon 8:6). Love never ends. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

Inside

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THE
Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ

110: 04
FEBRUARY 28, 1995

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARIES
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Come to the Lord's Table

- Conversations around the Lord's Table (see page 3)
- 'It's suppertime' (see page 9)

Prologue

Many of the church leaders gathered around the room on the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary campus in Elkhart, Ind., at the end of January said that the Mennonite church is in a period of exploration about the meaning and practice of the Lord's Supper. Marlene Kropf called it "a quiet revolution."

This issue of *The Mennonite* seeks to continue that conversation. We're asking readers to respond (see the questions listed on page 7). We invite letters to the editor about how your congregation practices Communion or about changes you would like to see the broader Mennonite church make. Write us at P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, e-mail CompuServe 72147,2746. You can be a part of giving direction in this important aspect of church life.

Perhaps your Sunday school class or small group would like to discuss this topic and use this issue of *The Mennonite* as a resource.

Besides my report of the discussion of these church leaders (pages 3-7), you may also read two poems (page 8), Jan Regier's meditation on Communion (page 9) and Marlene Kropf's Learning to Pray column (page 12).

Lent begins on March 1. May this season be a time of reflection for you as you draw closer to the One who invites us to the Lord's Table. *gh*

Next issue: The church in China

Cover: Photo by Gordon Houser, design by John Hiebert

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

Conversations around the Lord's Table

Mennonite leaders explore the meaning and practice of the Lord's Supper in our churches.

Gordon Houser

What do Mennonites believe about the Lord's Supper, or Communion? And what is happening in the church in our practice of the Lord's Supper? Two dozen or so pastors and church leaders from the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, as well as one Roman Catholic, gathered Jan. 27-28 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., for "Conversations Around the Lord's Table."

This gathering grew out of a Believers' Church conference last summer that focused on the Lord's Supper. Three Mennonite pastors—Weldon Nisly, John Rempel and Don Steelberg—and Marlene Kropf, minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and a teacher of spiritual formation at AMBS, who had attended that conference, became the planning committee for this one. They wanted to follow up on last summer's more scholarly focus with a meeting that had a more practical emphasis.

In her opening remarks, Marlene said that "there's a quiet revolution going on in Mennonite churches" as more and more move from celebrating Communion twice a year to six to eight times a year. She recounted her own experience from 20 years ago of being in a Christian community that celebrated the Eucharist (Lord's Supper) weekly. "I came to experience healing through the Eucharist," she said. (See her article on page 12.)

Others around the room told of their experiences of Communion:

- Ivan Kauffman grew up Mennonite but as a young adult joined the Roman Catholic Church. He participates in Communion daily, he said, and this frequency "has not trivialized it at all."
- Duane Beck, pastor at Belmont Mennonite Church in Elkhart, has become involved with teenagers from the city and helped develop a gun buyback program. The night before a gun buyback he led a worship service in which Communion was served. "These kids," he said, "who do not normally attend church, flocked to the [Communion] table."
- Ken Hawkley, director of adult/

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> **Marlene Kropf**

young adult education for the General Conference Mennonite Church, recalled experiencing Communion with friends as a party, whereas people in the church made it seem so solemn.

- Mary Oyer, who teaches church music and worship at AMBS, said that when she was growing up, Communion "always seemed like a funeral."
- Ken Beidler, a student at AMBS, remembered that while celebrating Communion on a beach in El Salvador a military helicopter flew over.
- Weldon Nisly, pastor at Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship, said he needs the liturgy and wonders how long he can stay a Mennonite when the Lord's Supper is not emphasized.

Everyone at this conversation agreed that the Mennonite church should practice the Lord's Supper more often than the traditional practice of twice or four times per year. Yet there seemed to be no way to convince people to change their practice other than asking them to try it more often and see what happens. Participants expressed a belief that participation in Communion more often will do most to instill how important the practice is.

Themes: Another theme of this conversation, and another point on which everyone expressed agreement, is that the death of Jesus is only one of a number of Communion themes that may be gleaned from the New Testament.

Marlene listed five New Testament Communion themes:

1. **Passover—New Exodus**, which focuses on liberation, justice and freedom;
2. **Death of Jesus**, which focuses on thanksgiving, memorial and sacrifice;
3. **The Risen Christ**, which focuses on Christ's presence and power;
4. **The church's meal**, which focuses on the unity of the body of believers and on fellowship;
5. **The Messianic banquet**, which focuses on eschatology, the Lamb's Feast.

Given the fact that the church has predominantly focused on the death of Jesus theme, this group focused on the other four in four different services during the two-day conversation.

After each service, participants talked about the experience. The first Eucharist focused on liberation and referred to the story in Matthew 2:13-18 of Jesus' family fleeing to Egypt when Herod began killing infants.

"Egypt," said Don Steelberg in his homily, "is the system, the captivity that keeps us from justice. ... Jesus calls us out of Egypt to the table of justice; the way to freedom and salvation is this Table."

One participant asked later, "How does our ritual lead us out into the world?" This then led to the question, Should we do our worship out in public places?

The second Eucharist focused on the Risen Christ and referred to Luke 24. "Listening to our burning hearts is often difficult and profound," said Weldon Nisly in his homily. "Let your head rest upon your heart."

The ritual for this service had participants walk in groups of three or four along a way. John Rempel, pastor at Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship, said he felt distracted by

Smiling at Communion

Mark Wiens

For a year I worked as an interim minister on the staff of Plymouth Congregational Church, a United Church of Christ congregation. Each time I handed a Communion tray to the deacon member receiving it, he or she would smile at me. There was a joy present in these people as they received the Communion elements.

Could it be, I thought to myself, that Christ wants us to experience joy at his table? We examine ourselves before we take the bread and cup (1 Corinthians 11:28-29). But did Christ say we couldn't smile and have joy? I haven't seen it anywhere in my Bible. We know from Scripture that none of us has a righteousness of our own that is good enough to stand before God (Romans 3). So why not receive Communion in the joy of knowing that the work Christ did on the cross for us was complete and wonderfully effective (1 Peter 3:18)?

Mark Wiens is associate pastor at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan.

the informal conversation on the way to taking the bread. Others enjoyed this, likening it to jazz improvisation.

The third Eucharist was a meal that included a foot-washing service and referred to John 13.

In discussing this later, the General Conference participants were not as familiar with foot washing, while the Mennonite Church participants were. One person asked, Is foot washing mostly cultural? Ivan Kauffman pointed out that in Jesus' time his act of washing his disciples' feet would have been seen as revolutionary. Philip Clemens, a pastor at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., said, "In this service we came for forgiveness."

The final Eucharist focused on the Messianic banquet referred to in the Book of Revelation. A small group from Belmont Mennonte Church provided a table laden with breads from various cultures around the world, plus fruit and sparkling grape juice. Several children handed out "crowns" for each participant to wear.

The group looked at several issues connected with Communion. John Rempel, whose dissertation has been published as *The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism* (Herald Press, 1993), talked about the meaning of the Lord's Supper for three Anabaptist leaders: Balthasar Hubmaier, Pilgram Marpeck and Dirk Philips. John said he is most drawn to Marpeck, for whom the Incarnation was central. Hubmaier, John said, reflects a fear of outward signs of God's work, while Philips, like Menno Simons, teaches the idea of "celestial flesh."

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Seven reasons for inviting children to take Communion

Donald R. Steelberg

1 The exclusion of children from Communion is based on church practice. No Scripture excludes them. That being so, we may counter practice. Anabaptist peoples before us have countered church practice.

2 Communion is an enacted story that tells us with a minimum of words how we are to live as followers of Jesus Christ. The Supper is a sacrament not only because the Lord said, "Do this," but also because a sacrament is a sign of deep truth from daily life. Children readily understand enacted stories.

3 Acceptance of children at Communion is based on the family tradition of the Jewish seder. The Johannine meal tradition is a family seder or a "chaburah," a meal taken by societies of friends on the eves of sabbaths or holy days, to which each member brings some provision for the common meal and at which religious discourse is the staple subject. Whereas the supper is composed of men only, the young church immediately opened attendance to women. This suggests the family nature of the seder. At family seders children would have been present as is seen in the Passover seder, where children take an active part and are involved in the drama.

4 The significance of one's understanding of tradition has been a key to the participation of children. For Western traditionalists the third and fourth centuries determine Eucharistic practice; the Anabaptists insisted on a return to New Testament practice. But even the Anabaptists did not practice all that was happening in the first century. For example, it is recorded by 115 C.E. that only the bishop is to celebrate Communion.

5 The young church understood from its inception that it could alter practice. The earliest tradition omits parts of the Supper to keep only the bread and the cup. The stories of the mass feedings in the Gospels are cast in a Communion motif.

6 The Anabaptist understandings of the bread representing the body of Christ and discerning the body of Christ are not impediments to children taking Communion. While children are not baptized, we consider children a part of the church and baptism a sign of discipleship rather than salvation. What better way to invite our children to the covenant of baptism than by inviting them to the banquet of life? When they come to a time of doubt, when they no longer feel themselves to be a part of the family, they will absent themselves. Our task is to show them that God does not exclude them.

7 We have never believed that the elements have power or are grace in themselves. Excluding children on the basis that they ought not take the elements because of their holy character suggests that we believe otherwise.

Donald R. Steelberg is pastor at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.

Two recipes for unleavened Communion bread

According to some research I've done, it seems unleavened bread has not traditionally been used to a large extent in the Mennonite church. Some congregations have preferred to use a large loaf of leavened bread, breaking it apart symbolically the way Jesus must have broken bread. Others cut the loaves of bread into long strips prior to the service for convenience in breaking off a portion for each person. There does seem to be more interest in using unleavened bread in recent years, however, in light of the symbolism of leaven in the Old Testament referring to sin. The cracker-like bread sticks here are made much like pie dough. The strips are pricked with a fork to make it easy to break off a small portion for each person. *Marlene Kropf*

4 cups flour
1/4 cup sugar
3/4 teaspoon salt
Mix together and reserve 3/4 cup of mixture.

3/4 cup margarine
Cut into remaining mixture until crumbly.

3/4 cup rich milk (evaporated milk or light cream)
Mix with the reserved dry mixture making a batter. Then add to dry crumbly mixture tossing with a fork until moist. Shape into a ball of dough.

Roll out into a 1/4-inch thick rectangle. Use a pizza cutter to cut into 1 1/4-inch by 6-inch strips. Prick each strip with a fork at four even points using a ruler to measure. Place on ungreased baking sheet and bake at 425° until just beginning to brown on the bottom. Yield: 200 servings.

Evelyn Kratz and Lois Wenger (from Mennonite Country-Style Recipes & Kitchen Secrets, *by Esther H. Shank, Herald Press, 1987)*

This recipe for unleavened bread comes from my maternal grandmother, Lillie Schrag Wolfer, who baked Communion bread for Sheridan (Ore.) Mennonite Church in her role as deacon's wife in the 1920s. Her twin sister, Fannie Schrag Shenk, says the recipe was brought to Oregon from Bishop Shenk's household in Elida, Ohio. When Lillie died in her early 30s, my Grandpa Wolfer remarried; his second wife, Ida Hostetler Wolfer, then became the baker of Communion bread for the congregation. She used the same recipe with variations listed below. *Marlene Kropf*

4 cups flour
1/3 cup sugar (Lillie's recipe calls for 1 tablespoon sugar)
1/2 pound butter
1/2 pint sweet cream
1/2 teaspoon salt (Lillie said she used no salt other than what was in the butter)

Mix flour, butter and sugar thoroughly; then moisten with cream. Beat dough well with a hammer for 20 minutes. Roll 1/4-inch thick, mark in squares. Stick with fork to prevent blistering. Bake in slow oven until golden brown. Makes enough for 100 members.

Grandma Wolfer noted that she made the bread richer by using less flour and cream. She says she also rolled the dough thinner.

Conversations around the Lord's Table

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According to Marpeck, God uses matter to communicate spirit. It's not the objects (bread and wine) that become Christ but the event that connects us with Christ. The symbol is not *merely* a symbol; it participates in the reality it symbolizes.

Children: A more practical issue that arises out of our understanding of Communion is what to do with children. Traditionally, Mennonites have excluded children, allowing only baptized believers to participate. However, that practice is being challenged.

Don Steelberg presented a brief paper on children and Communion (see box on page 5) in which he argues that children should be included. A number agreed; others weren't so sure.

"What hangs us up," said Weldon Nisly, "is the relationship between Communion and baptism."

Don said he sees baptism as entering into discipleship, having already chosen to love Jesus. A quick poll showed that four congregations represented in the group allow children to participate in Communion, while four others use alternatives for children, such as grapes or crackers.

Darrell Fast, pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan., said he felt it is important for children to wait until at least age 12 before participating in Communion.

Kathy Neufeld Dunn, pastor at Shalom Community Church in Ann

> *"What hangs us up is the relationship between Communion and baptism."*
> **Weldon Nisly**

Arbor, Mich., said that that approach works better with first-generation believers.

Janice Yordy Sutter, co-pastor at Kern Road Mennonite Church in South Bend, Ind., said, "We need to be deliberate about other ways of including children." Communion doesn't have to be the one thing that includes them.

The group looked at a host of other issues, some stemming from the double question, Who is invited and to what? They discussed Eucharistic evangelism, music and other arts, Eucharist as medicine, the place of symbol and ritual in the church, the tension of grace and obedience, bounded and centered communities, ecumenism, church discipline and baptism.

What next? the participants asked. Carry on this conversation in area conferences, said Duane Beck. Repeat this conversation in a year, said Rebecca Slough, who teaches at Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond, Ind. Suggest Communion as a theme for minister and spouse retreats, said Ken Hawkley.

Discuss it in *The Mennonite*, said I. And they agreed.

Gordon Houser is editor of The Mennonite.

Tell us what you think.

How many times per year does your congregation celebrate Communion? Should it be more often or less?

Does your congregation practice foot washing? Do you think it should?

Should children be invited to celebrate Communion?

Does your congregation ever use themes other than Jesus' death in its Communion services?

Resources on the Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism: A Study in the Christology of Balthasar Hubmaier, Pilgram Marpeck and Dirk Philips by John D. Rempel (Herald Press, 1993)

The Eucharist and the Hunger of the World by Monika K. Hellwig (Sheed and Ward, 1992)

Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation by William R. Crockett (Liturgical Press, 1992)

Exploring the Evolution of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament by John Michael Perry (Sheed and Ward, 1994)

"Sacraments as Social Process: Christ the Transformer of Culture" by John H. Yoder in **Theology Today** (April 1991)

"The Eucharist," Chapter 8 in **Introduction to Christian Worship** by James F. White (Abingdon, 1990)

Let us break bread

Das Maddimadugu

Let us break bread
On the lakeshores
On the mountainside
On the basking sandpiles.
Let us break bread
Inside the prison walls
Among illegal aliens
And in the refugee camps.
Let us break bread
Amid the sounds of war
Among the still living
And yet to be born.

Das Maddimadugu lives in Hyderabad, India.

Wallowitch

Communion

Rhonda Wiebe Warkentin

Fingerprints on piano
dog-eared hymnal

hungry baby squeaks and suckles

we wait to be nourished

no one speaks
feet shuffle
wood creaks

cough
stomach gurgle
stifled yawn

air moving as hands raise to mouths

jaws chewing
  dry tongues moving
  hollow swallows
  wine burning

sharp breath

cups return to their places

fed
by body and blood
and the pulse of human, human, sounds

Rhonda Wiebe Warkentin is associate youth pastor at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

'It's Suppertime'

A Communion meditation

Jan Regier

One of my mother's rules was that after I got home from school or church, I was to change my dress before going out to play. I had play clothes and school clothes, and one outfit for church.

One October, when I was in second grade, the school bus dropped my siblings and me off at the end of the driveway. While Maeanna, Bernard and Marcia were a little older and walked up the drive, as soon as my feet hit the dirt I was off in a run. Time was precious. I didn't know about the way the earth rotated on its axis and moved around the sun to give us day and night and the seasons of spring, summer, fall and winter. But my internal clock knew that the amount of after-school playtime outside was getting shorter and shorter as we approached winter. I had to maximize the opportunity.

I raced into the kitchen. "Hi, Mom, I'm home. What's there to eat, I'm starved." I grabbed some cookies and was ready to dash outside to play when I heard from the back room, "Change your dress. You can wear it again tomorrow." I knew the rule about changing my school clothes. But time was precious. I dashed outside to play.

Hours later I met Dad as he drove the tractor across the yard to park it in the barn for the night. I caught a ride on the back hitch. When we stopped I hopped down, and my skirt caught on a piece of bailing wire attached to the tractor. I heard my skirt rip.

Just then Mom called from the kitchen, "Supper's ready. Come eat."

Rather than face Mom and receive an "I told you to change your clothes," I hid in the bushes beneath the living room window. There I could monitor the sounds from inside the house. I heard Mom ask, "Where's Janice? Anyone seen her?"

"I thought she was just behind me," Dad said.

"Janice, supper's on. Come eat."

I sat as still as I could, crouched in the dark under the window, just a few feet from the kitchen door. Moments later, "Janice, where are you?"

"I'm here, Mom." By now I was sobbing.

"Why are you out there? Come in and eat."

"I can't. I tore my dress."

"Oh. The dress you wore to school today?"

"Yes." As a mother I now understand what must have been going through my mother's mind at that moment. Once again she was being asked to find that tender balance between being firm yet forgiving. She knew I had already learned my lesson.

"Well come in, I'm sure it isn't anything we can't mend. We're all waiting for you. It's suppertime."

I got up, wiped my face with my skirt and went in to supper.

I learned something that day about rules and that maybe Mom had a good reason for wanting me to change my clothes after school.

But more than this, I learned about the love, patience and forgiveness of my mother. I don't remember any scolding. I only remember being invited back into the house. I learned that my mom cared a lot more about me than about my dress.

I also learned that my mother needed me at her supper table. I was an irreplaceable part of her family, and without me in my chair suppertime would not be the same.

The Communion table is set before us. It's suppertime. A time to come together and remember and experience our Heavenly Parent's love for us, God's forgiveness and patience with us. In theological terms, our redemption and salvation. Come to the Table with your burdens, your fears, regrets, sins, hopelessness, confusion, brokenness. Come to the Table as you are. God doesn't expect perfect children any more than a wise and loving earthly parent would. You are unique and irreplaceable at this Table. Come to the Table and be renewed and receive this strengthening food and the assurance that you are a beloved son or daughter of God. It's suppertime.

Come to the Table with your burdens, your fears, regrets, sins, hopelessness, confusion, brokenness.

Jan Regier lives in Newton, Kan.

Letters

IRISH POLITICS

From Bernie Wiebe's intriguing article on the "hot" Irish (Nov. 22, 1994, issue) it is clear that the time Wiebe spent in Dublin provided him with insights. What is not so clear, however, is his understanding of Irish politics.

Wiebe writes, "[Gerry] Adams is the head of Sinn Fein, the militant wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), known for trying to build an Ireland independent of Britain." At least two things are wrong with this sentence.

First, the Republic of Ireland, which contains 12 of the 16 counties that make up the island of Ireland, is already independent of Britain. Its capital is Dublin. The remaining four counties make up Northern Ireland, otherwise known as Ulster. Ulster is a part of the United Kingdom and is under the political control of the British houses of parliament.

It is more correct to say that the IRA wishes the *unification* of Ireland. Ireland gained its independence from Britain in 1929. Northern Ireland was created at the same time. It remained part of the United Kingdom because the majority of its citizens were Protestant, while nearly all the citizens of the Republic of Ireland were Catholic. The Protestants were fearful of the same "passion" and moral certitude Wiebe so admires.

Second, Sinn Fein is the *political* wing of the IRA. The IRA is a paramilitary organization; Sinn Fein is a political party.

Wiebe says the trip Gerry Adams made to the United States following the IRA's unilateral cease-fire "confounded the Irish and the British." I doubt this strongly. Adams has been to the United States before, where the IRA has some popular and financial support, particularly in the expatriate Irish community around Boston and New York City.

Wiebe seems unaware that Adams is considered a terrorist by many people. To cast Adams in the light of a peacemaker too easily tends to lend credibility to 25 years of murder.

While the Irish likely have lessons to teach us about moral passion, they have lessons to teach us about excess, too. Is Wiebe aware, for example, that a couple of years ago the moral passion of the Irish told a teenaged girl who'd been raped that if she went to England for an abortion she'd be arrested for murder when she returned home? This was why the equally passionate Irish pop star Sinead O'Connor tore up a picture of the Pope on NBC's "Saturday Night Live."

Canada and the United States are pluralistic societies; this is our strength, not our weakness, as Wiebe's article tends to suggest. We are multicultural countries and shouldn't try to pretend otherwise.

Further, I doubt North Americans are as lukewarm as Wiebe seems to think. *Michael Bryson, Waterloo, Ont.*

DON'T MUDDY INTEGRATION

What is all this talk about two national groups? Why muddy up the talks on MC/GC integration?

I don't know what is happening at the national level of the church, but I know that at the congregational level we don't think about two national groups. We have friends in Canada, members in our congregation come from Canada, we get voluntary service workers from Canada, we have visitors at our services from Canada, some of our members move to Canada—it makes no difference. As Ted Koontz says (Dec. 13, 1994, issue, page 9), "If we can't work more closely together, with all our commonalities, how do we expect the world's countries to do so?"

I suspect some of the Canadian feelings are a projection—felt more by them than national location would require. Are they too influenced by their secular nationalists?

At a time that the Chinese Christians "believe postdenominationalism is a gift from God," can't we just continue with a GC/MC merger process? *Frances B. Ewy, Fresno, Calif.*

SEMINAR SHOWS BRAZEN UNBELIEF

I was chagrined when I read the news excerpt on the findings of the so-called "Jesus Seminar." I fear that those who are not well grounded in the faith will be shaken in their faith. It is to such that this letter is directed.

In their latest pronouncement, these scholars conclude that Mary had sexual relations before she became pregnant with Jesus. This is a direct contradiction of the New Testament. When the angel announced to Mary that she would bring forth a son who would be the Savior of the world, Mary said, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" The angel then went on to say, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). For the so-called Jesus Seminar to reject the clear teaching of this passage of Scripture is nothing more nor less than a brazen declaration of unbelief.

Many centuries ago a similar group of erudite men stood before Jesus. They were refusing to believe in him. Jesus said to these scribes, lawyers, Pharisees and Sadducees, "If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). What a solemn warning. May these words continue to be a warning, both to scholars who reject the Scriptures and to those who might be tempted to follow their pernicious ways. *Alfred E. Sauer, Moundridge, Kan.*

THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED

Thank you for printing my story ("How We Stopped Fearing the Nazis," Dec. 13, 1994, issue, page 3). The Midwestern states live on in my memory. It was from Nebraska that we received

Ideas your church can try

Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church prepared welcome bags for school-age children's quiet activities during worship services.

Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan., held a peace reading month last September. The congregation used the peace library supplied by Western District Conference. The library includes 52 books on peace themes, plus audiocassettes and ideas for cooperative games and activities.

many care packages just after the war. We were suffering from malnutrition, and it was only because of those packages that we recovered our health, and as a healthy family were accepted as immigrants to Canada.

However, as I remember it, my grandmother Dorothea Hochhalter was not allowed to come [to Canada] because she was too old. It was my aunt Olga Margolin who stayed in Germany to look after my grandmother (her mother).

A year after we came to Canada it was again from the Midwest that my aunt and grandmother received help. The Christian people of the Bethel Home for the Aged, Newton, Kan., brought them to the United States. It did a lot for our faith to know that other Christians still cared about Germans after that terrible war and all those atrocities.

My Aunt Olga was a bright, ambitious person until the war. She had completed her nurse's training in Russia. Her bravery in the face of the Nazis was not appreciated during the war. I hope people who knew my aunt will read the story and learn what she suffered and how brave she was. Thanks again for printing it. *Ernest Hochhalter, Porters Lake, Nova Scotia*

CONTROL CONSUMPTION

A letter written by Mary Beth Janzen titled "Overpopulation" appeared in the Nov. 22, 1994, issue and encouraged us to help bring the "carefully crafted Cairo Programme of Action to life." This deals with the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, held last fall in Cairo, Egypt. Janzen's support of the conference and its agenda prompts me to respond.

Janzen's statement that there is a "correlation between population growth and environmental degradation" warrants challenge. Keeping in mind that God views children as blessings (Psalm 127: 3, 5) and that we are to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28; 1 Timothy 2:15), then we can rest assured that if we seek God's will in this area he will provide for us.

There are about 6 billion people in the world and about 267,000 square miles in Texas. If you brought every man, woman and child in the world to Texas, each would have about 1,000 square feet of space to themselves. That's a fair amount of elbow-room and leaves the whole rest of the world as space to produce and provide for all. Our problem is not too many people, each of whom God sees as individually valuable, but greed, poor stewardship, inefficient use of space, poorly distributed resources, recent highly polluting technologies and (I agree with Janzen) overconsumption. We look foolish pointing our finger at Third World countries (many of which are Roman Catholic, Muslim or have a pro-life ethic) and demanding their population control while we are the greediest consumers on the planet.

Perhaps we are passively accepting the media hysteria on population control without doing our homework on alternative viewpoints. *The Way Home* by Mary Pride and *The Resourceful Earth: A Response to Global 2000* give different views on environmental and population "problems" and are a great place to start educating ourselves on the environment/population topic while drawing our own informed conclusions. This is not to say that I believe there are no problems; it's some of the solutions that make me wary, including suggestions for controlled famine and cure-proof diseases.

Janzen concludes that "in a world of limited resources, stabilizing the population is crucial." The Bible is strangely silent on the topic of population control and family planning; in fact quite the opposite is true. In a world where babies are blessings (and who'd turn down a blessing?), our "quality of life" may not depend on population control so much as on consumer self-control. *Lora Beachy, Woodburn, Ind.*

CHRISTIAN INVESTMENT

J.B. Miller's recent column, "Rewards and Risks of International Investing" (Jan. 10 issue, page 14) is more appropriate for the secular media than a church paper.

No mention was made of the application of Christian ethics to investment strategy. No concern was expressed for the end use of investment funds, only profits and the risk to the investor were important.

I'd like to see an article giving examples of the end use of money in some high-yield mutual funds. Include a list of ethically sound investment opportunities. Modest returns may be achieved in church-related investments, but at least the end use would not be lost in a long paper trail. *George Fast, Kitchener, Ont.*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Moscow—I've been trying to build relations with a group of 14 Bible students at the Orthodox university. I've been trying to cultivate the idea that they not only receive help but also participate in giving assistance. The special Christmas project I'm trying to put together is a food package for pensioners through a community group called Salus. It will buy the food, and the students will help assemble the packages and distribute them. Working with Orthodox believers is a slow process of building bridges over misunderstandings, using vocabulary that is foreign to both of us. The theological language they use to express faith is different from Catholic and Protestant language. *Walter Bergen*

The Bergens' "Mission Partners," four congregations in British Columbia and Manitoba, raised $500 U.S. to purchase what went into the Christmas packages.

Beijing—Todd [Friesen] and I have taken on a weekly English class downtown for local Christians. This was our pastor's brainchild; she applied for government approval a couple of months ago. It came through last November, and we started the following week. The Chinese church is interested in broadening its ecumenical ties with international Christians. Our two classes are made up largely of middle-aged women who serve as pastors, lay leaders, seminary professors and office personnel. We're thrilled by this rare chance to do something concrete for the local church. But the work is demanding. Neither of us has ever taught English at such a basic level before, but neither have we ever had more appreciative students. A bonus, too, is the host of friendly faces now on Sundays in church. *Dennette Alwine*

There is a balm in Gilead

Communion as a place for healing

Marlene Kropf

We come to the Communion table for many reasons. Underlying all other reasons is the joyful welcome of Christ, who calls us to the Table to receive the gifts of bread and wine. As we eat and drink, we remember Jesus' suffering and death for our sake, we rejoice in the presence of the living Christ among us and we look forward in hope to the fullness of Christ's reign.

Throughout the centuries, however, Christians have recognized another reason to come to Christ's Table. Ancient Christians spoke of bread and wine as "medicine for the soul." They believed that the Table of the Lord was a place of healing. All who came in faith could reach out for Christ's healing touch.

The Reformers also proclaimed the healing properties of eating at Christ's Table. A Communion meditation penned by John Knox (1514-1572) says this:

"Let us consider, then, that this sacrament is a singular medicine for all poor, sick creatures, a comfortable help to weak souls, and that our Lord requireth no other worthiness on our part but that we unfeignedly acknowledge our … imperfection. The only way to dispose our souls to receive nourishment [and] relief … is to lift up our minds by faith … and thereby to enter into heaven, that we may find and receive … to whom be all praise, honour and glory" (cited in *Invitations to Communion* by Alec J. Langford, CBP Press, 1986).

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Although I had not been formally introduced to the connection between Communion and healing, I discovered it for myself when I worshiped for a year in a church that celebrated Communion weekly. After several months there, I became aware of a strange sensation each week. By Thursday or Friday I found myself becoming hungry for bread and wine. At first I dismissed the impulse, but then I began to recognize that my body and soul were both longing for the nourishment of the Lord's Table. As the Communion ritual became more familiar to me I entered more and more deeply into the prayers. One prayer especially became my own, and I found myself straining toward the moment each Sunday when we would pray this prayer:

"Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed."

Though I had no categories for explaining what was happening, I met Christ each week at the Table and received healing grace for the struggles of my heart and soul.

One way some Mennonite churches express their conviction that physical, emotional and spiritual healing is a gift to be received at the Lord's Table is by including prayers for healing in Communion services. I've seen it happen this way:

Following the invitation to the Table, prayers of thanksgiving and words of institution, worshipers come forward to receive the bread and cup. After they have partaken, they may return to their pews or remain for prayer. The worshipers pray individually (often kneeling in an area behind or to the side of the Communion table), or they are joined by an elder or deacon who prays for them and anoints them with oil. Meanwhile the congregation continues to sing songs of praise and thanksgiving and joins in prayer on behalf of those who desire healing.

Prayers for healing may not be appropriate in every Communion service, but they offer an important way for churches to minister in Christ's name. We sometimes sing the familiar African-American spiritual "There Is a Balm in Gilead." Might the Lord's Table be a place where the healing balm of Christ's presence is proclaimed and offered to all "sick creatures and weak souls"?

RNS

Might the Lord's Table be a place where the healing balm of Christ's presence is proclaimed and offered to all "sick creatures and weak souls"?

MCC contact

- A Mennonite Central Committee publication
- February 1995
- vol 17
- no 1

The steadfast love
f the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never
come to an end;
are new every morning;
reat is your faithfulness.
—Lamentations 3:22

new mercies

MCC ANNUAL REPORT 1994

Haiti, MCC bean distribution

1994 in review

Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) partners are "in touch with a dream that makes them visionaries of a new future," wrote theologian Henri J. R. Nouwen in "A Dry Roof and a Cow," the book MCC published in 1994 to launch the celebration of its 75th anniversary. MCC's workers drew inspiration and energy from these visionaries.

MCC highlights were:

Rwandan refugees...

Mennonites in North America, Japan, Zaire and Europe mobilized generous support—food, blankets, clothing and cash—for the thousands of Rwandan refugees who fled that country's civil war. "This extraordinary situation required an extraordinary response; MCC material resource shipments were the largest since World War II," noted Executive Secretary John A. Lapp.

"Thank you from the depths of our hearts" for this assistance, Rwandan refugees and Zairian church leaders told Lapp when he visited in October. They appreciated the "character of the disciples" the Mennonites sent. A six-person team—three North Americans, three Zairians— went to Bukavu, Zaire, to dig latrines, set up accounting systems, hold workshops on peace and other tasks assigned by the Evangelical Church of Zaire refugee resettlement committee.

In Tanzania four MCC workers counseled traumatized Rwandan refugees and helped church leaders initiate mediation processes. Says Dr. A. Richard Weaver, of Ephrata, Pa., an MCC-sent counselor, "Whether people are victims or killers, in God's sight they all suffer spiritually and need healing."

Rwandan refugees in Zaire

warring, fractured nations...

The three-year war in former Yugoslavia depleted people's spiritual, emotional, physical and material reserves. At year-end a Croatian partner alerted MCC that its warehouse was empty. "Anxiety about starvation in some Bosnian towns was increasing as winter approached," noted Europe Secretary Hansulrich Gerber. MCC released funds to purchase 30 metric tons of wheat.

Haiti...

Haiti was in and out of the news in 1994. Some MCC workers left Haiti due to political unrest and then returned when the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the presence of U.S. troops and the lifting of international sanctions brought order to Haiti's hills and streets. By year-end it was not clear whether military intervention would bring long-term peace and stability to Haiti. While resolving to "rejoice in the Lord" as Habakkuk resolved, an MCC health worker there also echoed the prophet's questions of God: "Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong?"

and Laos.

1994 was the year MCC, with a British humanitarian agency, initiated a million dollar project to train Laotians to clear hundreds of thousands of unexploded Vietnam War-era bombs from the fields of Xieng Khouang province.

MCC **seeks to demonstrate God's love through committed women and men who work among people suffering from poverty, conflict, oppression and natural disaster.**

MCC **serves as a channel for interchange between churches and community groups where we work around the world and the North American churches who send us, so that all may grow and be transformed.**

MCC **strives for peace, justice and dignity of all people by sharing our experiences, resources and faith in Jesus Christ.**

••• **MCC mission statement**

1994 highlights for MCC Canada were:

work with Native Canadians

In 1994 Davis Inlet, Labrador, become synonymous with despair after a group of young people attempted suicide. But at year-end the first permanent restaurant in the community was serving self-esteem along with burgers, fries and caribou stew. Mark and Sonia Bromley, MCC economic development advisors among Labrador's Innu, said, "The restaurant—the first and only Innu-owned business in Davis Inlet—is a bit of good news from a community noted for trouble and tragedy over the past months."

praise for recycling

In 1994 a national recycling organization praised the MCC-supported Edmonton Recycling Society (ERS), as a "model for Canada" because of its aggressive marketing of recycled material. The 70 ERS employees, a quarter of whom are physically or mentally disabled or have been hard to employ, sort 52 tons of recyclable material daily.

On the cover: "Moma" Alphonsine plays with one of the 146 Rwandan refugee children at Center of Hope, a home for children separated from their parents during Rwanda's civil war and a chaotic flight to Zaire.

Davis Inlet, Labrador

1994 highlights for MCC U.S. were:

focus on reconciliation, healing

1994 marked the 10th year in which Mennonite Conciliation Service offered its summer Mediation Training Institute, a week of hands-on learning that attracts participants from all over North America and even other countries. To date nearly 300 people have taken this course in practical peacemaking.

"Enter the River," written by Jody Miller Shearer, staff associate for racism awareness, appeared in bookstores. Miller Shearer also authored a junior high Bible study curriculum on living without violence and, with others, developed a poster and brochure on racism. The popular Summer Service program expanded to provide work and leadership development opportunities to 67 youth of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.

health care

The MCC U.S. board came out in favor of universal health care coverage, a message the U.S. Washington Office staff carried to legislators. Some termed the 1994 attempt at national health care reform "the most important legislative effort since the civil rights act of the '60s," said staffperson Karl Shelly. MCC U.S. and Mennonite Mutual Aid had ongoing conversations about health care reform initiatives throughout 1994.

••• **Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker**
MCC Communications

The grace of receiving

Partners, even in settings of poverty, teach us the grace of receiving. With profound simplicity, Elena Diaz, a grandmother in Bangladesh featured in MCC's 75th anniversary book "A Dry Roof and a Cow" says: "I don't really have any desires. I would like to go to the Lord. I would like a dry shelter." Desiring nothing means whatever comes is accepted as a gift. But this lack of selfish desires does not mean passivity. Elena's furrowed brow and weatherbeaten hands signal her hard work. Her bright eyes and jutting lower lip indicate energy and determination. Material goods we take for granted are for her precious gifts.

Elena Diaz

Lessons learned from *partners*

In 1994 Mennonite Central Committee worked with women's groups, farmers' cooperatives, church councils, grassroots advocacy groups, Asia Mennonite Conference, African Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Fellowship, China's Sichuan Education Commission, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Habitat for Humanity, L'Arche, Choice Books and Church and Peace in Europe, to name a few partners.

MCC also worked with dozens of denominations: Protestant, Baptist, Lutheran, Roman Catholic and various Orthodox churches. A list of congregations MCC workers served and worshiped with would number in the hundreds.

Yet each of these workers experienced the paradox of service: one gives not to receive, but when one gives, one receives life's truly valuable gifts and lessons.

The joy of service

Tamar, from Chad, underscored for MCC worker Cathy Hodder the joy of service. Tamar and Cathy spent Thursdays scouring the 16-room pediatric ward of one of the main hospitals in N'Djamena. "Tamar, who had nine children to feed and who did not know where their next meal was coming from, insisted on not being paid for two of the 16 days of work," Cathy relates. "Tamar said she wanted to experience, as I do, the joy of serving others as a volunteer."

Patience

Anthony Scola, who served in Sudan, learned from the Sudanese how to accept life's difficulties gracefully. The ordinary citizen there, he explained, lives with an economy in shambles, cuts in water and electricity, few medical services and constant illnesses. Yet Sudanese manage to be "the most generous, friendly, hospitable people you will ever meet," Scola says. "I don't see the point of undergoing pain for its own sake, but I certainly now see the wisdom of allowing life to happen, of accepting pain as part of life, while doing what we can to try to improve conditions."

Hospitality

Sanctuaries and church yards in eastern Zaire overflowed with so many Rwandan refugees that church services had to be canceled. "Would we allow people to erect tents, light fires and dig latrines on our church lawns in North America?" asked volunteer David Klassen.

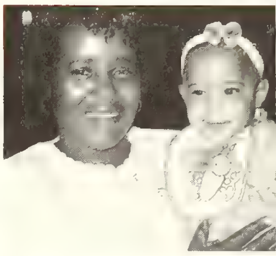
Pastor Morales St. Hilaire

Serving and befriending

"Haitians come here and cannot speak English. They cannot read or write. I don't see any future for their children. My biggest dream is to see Haitian kids have a good education. This way, they can help others," noted Pastor Morales St. Hilaire, who for many years has befriended MCC workers who live and work among Haitians in Belle Glade, Fla.

Courageous compassion

In the United States, Barbara Martin directed SURVIVE, a support group in New Orleans that MCC helped start for families who have lost a spouse, parent, son or daughter to homicide. MCC workers were moved by the compassion and faith with which Barbara and SURVIVE members daily confronted the unyielding misery and horror produced by homicide.



Barbara Martin

Skills in empowering poor people

Lessons learned from partners overseas can be applied to job creation efforts in North America. Two projects in Canada—SEED Winnipeg and the Alberta Self-Employment Support Project in Calgary—give loans to low-income people who want to start their own businesses; the projects are modeled after a successful lending program in Bangladesh. "The popular belief is that people in the developing world need to learn from us," says Gary Loewen of SEED Winnipeg. "The truth is we can learn from them." In 1994, its first year, SEED helped start, stabilize or expand 16 businesses including a Latin American grocery, self-employed courier, Native artist and clothing designer.

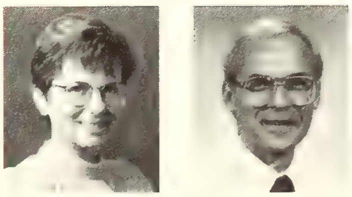
Sacrificial giving

MCC worker Leo Martin of Hagerstown, Md., was inspired by Bill. For seven years Bill has contributed to MCC each month, gradually increasing his gift until it reached $298 per month. In those seven years he missed only one month. He wrote that month: "My wife passed away and I need to pay for her funeral expenses."

Don and Ruth Roth of Morton, Ill., may identify themselves as a farm family, but they could also be called full-time MCC volunteers. Winter and spring they coordinated the Peoria Mennonite Relief Sale; in summer they helped with the House Against Hunger in Hopedale, Ill., and helped distribute peaches, an MCC fund-raising activity; in the fall they harvested grain and contributed to an MCC food drive.

In communities around the world, MCC workers are inspired by partners who are finding creative ways to encourage peacemaking and reconciliation in the lives of individuals and their families and communities. Together they nurture the gospel vision of reconciled people in a reconciled world.

••• **Lynette Meck**
MCC U.S. Executive Secretary
••• **Ray Brubacher**
MCC Overseas Secretary



MCC Contact (ISSN 1060-3492) is published in February, May, August and November by Mennonite Central Committee, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. Editors are Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker, Pearl Sensenig and John Longhurst. Design by Michael Eby-Good. Copies are sent in bulk to church addresses upon request. Address correspondence to **MCC Contact** Editor, 21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. In Canada, address correspondence to **MCC Contact** Editor, MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Dr., Winnipeg, MB, R3T 5K9. Second class postage paid at Akron, Pa., and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. Printed in U.S.A.

Photo credits: Page 1, Jon Warren; page 2, Emily Will, Jon Warren; page 3, G. Bruce Hildebrand; page 4, Shahidul Alam; page 5, Dorothy Littell Greco, Earl Martin, Howard Zehr, Kevin Sensenig; page 6, Howard Zehr, Howard Zehr, Marcia Garland; page 7, G. Bruce Hildebrand, John Leckie, Pearl Sensenig; page 8, G. Bruce Hildebrand; page 9, Doug Dirks, Torrie Martin, Howard Zehr; page 10, John Finn, Mark Beach; page 11, Titus Peachey, John Leckie, Mark Beach; page 12, Mark Will, Emily Will, Emily Will; page 13, Howard Zehr, Pearl Sensenig; page 16, Mark Will, Howard Zehr.

MCC canned meat, Moscow

More than a *warmer night*

A sign others have not forgotten

Many people who shared sweaters, blankets and cash in 1994 "confessed that they were overwhelmed by the number of Rwandan refugees who needed food and clothing," noted MCC Canada Executive Director John Dyck. "Like the disciples who told Jesus—'all we have is five loaves and two fishes' Matt. 13:21—they felt that whatever they gave was inadequate to meet the needs of refugees in eastern Zaire and people in other places."

In 1994 volunteers donated 29,000 person-days to make blankets as part of MCC's service to people in need. "God's spirit led thousands of people to express their Christian compassion in this way—together making a big difference," observed John Dyck.

The recipients of MCC-sent resources saw the blankets, school kits and food, though, as more than a warmer night or an easier time doing homework or meat to eat with their potatoes.

Photo by Marcia Garland, Intelligencer Journal

John and Arlene Hess, Lancaster, Pa., have made about two tons of soap each year for 20 years for MCC to share with others.

Tamara Zuk uses MCC soap, Belgrade

"After getting to know one Bosnian refugee family in particular, it became clear to me that the MCC soap they had received represented far more than cleaning power. For them and for other refugees, such gifts represent a link to individuals who care about them. A simple bar of soap becomes a symbol of care and concern," wrote MCC writer Emily Will in November.

"Dear brothers and sisters of MCC," began a letter from a staff person of a Christian refugee assistance group in Belgrade, Serbia, "we want to thank you for the beef and blankets. The newest groups of refugees have until now been closed and depressed. When I told them how the beef is canned and of the love and concern that go along with the meat, for the first time they showed some response and started to open up more with us. It seems a spiritual blessing has been put in with the meat and preserved until opened here!"

Growing carrots *immunizing children*

MCC hydrologist Mike Roberts and So Khat, 72, pedal a water well as they calculate how much irrigation water is pumped into a field. Irrigation enables Cambodian farmers to grow more food for their families.

Zaire

Plots of collards and carrots

The Lord's Prayer reminds us God does not want people to be hungry. So it is no surprise that feeding hungry people has been integral of MCC's ministry since 1920, initially by shipping and distributing foodstuffs and more recently by also sending agriculturists to rural communities. In 1994, 39 agriculturists served in 15 countries.

Agriculturist Ed Good worked with Angolan farmers in a refugee settlement in Botswana. These 23 farmers have hand-tilled a half acre each for the past five years, growing collards, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, onions and beans to eat and to sell. "I pray the time I spent with them will not only help them care for themselves physically, but that also they will be more aware of God's love for humanity," wrote Ed.

Residents of Kinshasa, Zaire, home to more than 4 million people, turned vacant lots and roadsides into gardens where they grew leaf amaranth and other food. MCC workers organized seminars on cultivation practices and helped buy seeds and tools at affordable prices.

Bandages and booster shots

MCC's commitment to health care is founded on Jesus' example of healing both physical and spiritual pain. Today MCC's 47 health care workers—nurses, doctors, water technicians, nutritionists, sanitation engineers—strive to prevent and cure illnesses, often in communities where health care is least accessible.

In remote Irian Jaya, Indonesia, MCC workers helped villages set up mini-medical stations where children can come to wash and bandage cuts, scrapes and small wounds. Villagers contribute a few coins or vegetables in exchange for these first-aid supplies. When MCC workers first went to some villages, nearly every child had fly-covered, oozing skin infections.

Andrei Kuznetsov, the first Russian to participate in MCC Canada's Native Gardening Program, applied the skills and knowledge he acquired in his parents' gardens and greenhouses to help families in Labrador build greenhouses.

A modern health clinic, opened in 1992, was a "shot in the arm" for the residents of Porcupine, on South Dakota's Pine Ridge reservation. Due to lack of health care, "almost every family has some sort of medical horror story," noted the clinic director. MCC physician Merlin Friesen served there in 1994.

Children who in February saw a terrorist gun down worshippers at Hebron's Al-Ibrahimi Mosque received post-traumatic stress counselling from Palestinian mental health experts at Beit Sahour YMCA. MCC funded the counselling.

In Canada, the Mental Health Program helped put the issue of mental illness and the church "on the table," noted former director Travis Reimer. "People struggling with it feel like lepers—they believe if people knew their secret they wouldn't reach out a helping hand." By talking about mental illness, churches can reach out to members and others struggling with it.

Processing wild rice, Ontario

creating jobs, *generating income*

In our society the question asked after "What is your name?" is "What do you do?" On one hand this is a tacit recognition that, as humans, we are created in God's image. Genesis 2:3 says that "On the seventh day God rested from God's work."

Through work and the income earned, we support ourselves and our families, contribute to society and find meaning and purpose in life. So the question "What do you do?" is a cruel jab for unemployed people anywhere.

MCC workers strive to help those who are un- and underemployed find new ways to earn dignity and income. Wrote Steven Gonslaves, MCC staff worker in India: "If you could visit some of our women's groups in Calcutta, you would see that income is only one benefit of the program. After that comes friendship, self-esteem, community, problem-solving, mutual aid, literacy and health programs and a host of other positive social factors."

Beads, wild rice and trees

In Kyle, S.D., Darelyn Long Soldier, a summer service worker, marketed Lakota crafts to tourists passing through town. The patience of the Lakota people is woven into their crafts— intricately designed items of tiny rainbow-colored beads or dyed porcupine quills and skillfully pieced star quilts.

Workers at Canada's only Native-owned and operated wild rice processing plant in northwestern Ontario produced 22,000 kilograms/50,000 pounds of wild rice in the fall, 80 percent of which was sold to Europeans. The operation, named Kagiwiosa Manomin, started in 1985 with help from MCC.

"Planting trees for Jesus" was the slogan given to EcoTree, a project started in 1994. Eight unemployed people were hired with funds from MCC B.C. and the Canadian government to plant 100,000 seedlings in British Columbia's lower mainland. Millions of trees have been cut there; at the same time, thousands of area residents were out of work.

MCC also helped people overseas start small businesses, producing items to sell locally. This work is fraught with difficulties, and success sometimes lies beyond the control of the entrepreneur, no matter how hard-working.

A Santa Cruz candlemaker, who wanted to buy a house, for example, had perfected a candle and was establishing a market niche when the Bolivian government, as part of its crackdown on cocaine, pulled wax from all city shops. Wax is needed to make cocaine from coca leaves. The candlemaker now bakes bread to sell.

Despite these steps backward, the testimonies of those who now have income have caused MCC to strengthen its efforts to create jobs and generate income during the next three years.

Emad Ekran Attia started a co-op in Egypt that employs 12 artisans, all university graduates and Coptic Orthodox Christians. They paint papyrus cards and pictures with motifs from Pharaonic paintings, icons and original sketches. Their creations are sold through SELFHELP Crafts. Youth in Egypt, particularly Christian youth, have difficulty finding jobs.

SELFHELP Crafts of the World

In 1994, through its SELFHELP Crafts program, MCC created the equivalent of 11,600 full-time jobs for Third World artisans in about 30 countries by selling their crafts in Canada and the United States.

SELFHELP Crafts helped artisans establish a fair price for their handicrafts based on local market economies and then paid them, as it has since 1946, a 50 percent advance and the balance in full when items were completed and ready to be shipped to North America. Most importers pay only when items are sold to customers.

In 1994 SELFHELP Crafts developed its first direct-mail catalog as a way to tell artisans' stories and sell their creations to people in the United States who do not live near a shop that carries SELFHELP Crafts items.

The income from the sales of these handcrafted items means Rosa Pariona and her husband who live in a squatter community on the edge of Lima, Peru, can support their 10 children. They make replicas of vicuñas, a relative of the llama, from wire and scraps of wool. These vicuñas are sold through SELFHELP Crafts.

Palestinian carvers are forbidden to sell their goods in Jerusalem. SELFHELP Crafts gives them an outlet for their work.

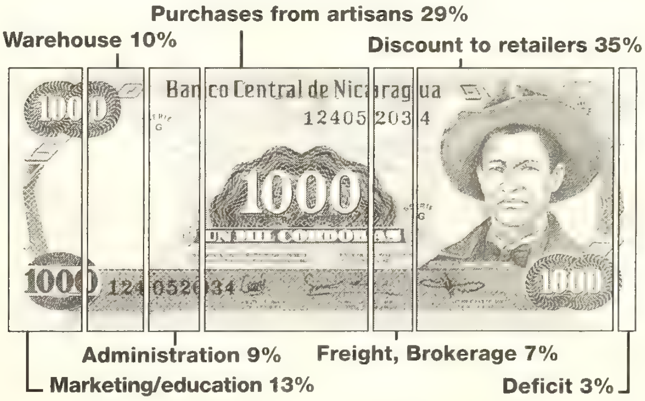
Persina Doncillo

For Persina Doncillo and other members of Sapa-Sapa Women's Jewelry Association in the Philippines SELFHELP Crafts means a fair wage. Previously some members of the association worked in local jewelry factories and were paid low wages for long hours of work. In the Philippines, many of the 60 million people are poor and unemployed; employers often take advantage of this and pay less than minimum wage.

SELFHELP Crafts aims to sell more crafts in North America in the next five years, so more families can feed, clothe, shelter and educate their children.

••• **Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker**
MCC Communications

1994 DISTRIBUTION OF U.S. AND CANADIAN RETAIL SALES:



In Burkina Faso Karim Passoule's dream is to be a teaching "magician," a dream held by committed teachers worldwide. Karim says: "Sometimes students say, 'Oooh, is the thing so simple? Last year I understood nothing.' They think there is magic in transmitting knowledge." Karim teaches French and English at an MCC-run school for people wanting to learn French and other local languages.

Cambodian school children line up to receive school kits sent by Mennonites from Hokkaido, Japan.

Learning a *vocation*

1994 found 98 MCC teachers in classrooms, kitchens and libraries in 26 countries in five continents teaching forestry, budgeting, English, reading and writing. Some of the education was formal, some nonformal.

In Regina, Sask., MCC worker Terri Peters directed an adult literacy program at that city's library when government cutbacks threatened to close a computer lab where adults learned to read through a process that includes interactive videos and word processing.

In Los Angeles' Inglewood area, MCC intern Cynthia Pickett worked at Calvary Christian School, which aims to meet students' spiritual, emotional and academic needs. Cynthia assisted teachers and administration, trained teachers' aides, and listened to any of the 130 students, grades pre-kindergarten to six, in need of special attention.

Overseas

Eight teachers taught English in Chinese technical institutes and universities through the inter-Mennonite China Educational Exchange Program. Others taught English to Christians in Egypt, enhancing their job opportunities; Christians, as a discriminated-against minority there, find it increasingly difficult to find jobs and support their families.

In Calcutta, India, MCC supported an agency that educated 150 street children. Forced to fend for themselves from an early age, most street children cannot attend school. But children at the agency learned the "three Rs" through games, crafts, songs and practical skills training.

In Brazil Amy Tripp taught teachers at the School for the Deaf, a school started by MCC and now supported in part through the Global Family Program. She offered alternatives to the rote memorization and copying exercises that prevail in most schools. She and the parish priest also placed six older deaf students in a regular classroom with an interpreter, one of Brazil's first mainstreaming efforts.

Mary Raber taught church history and Christian education at a Bible college in Donetsk, an industrial and mining city in the Ukraine. Sixty-two students came to the college from all over the former Soviet Union; they are eager to learn now that communism has fallen. "The church is growing; people are hungry for the Word," Raber said.

Bombie removal, Laos

In 1993 Nang Saiko, a widow, and her daughter Posau were working in their garden when Posau's hoe struck a bomb. The explosion killed Posau and wounded Nang Saiko. Despite having little food for her surviving children, Nang Saiko is too frightened to tend her rice field.

Bringing peace *to trouble spots*

Peace and peacemaking permeated MCC's witness in 1994. This commitment to peace was visible throughout MCC's program, people and supporting churches.

Members of Bethel Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa., found a different kind of Christmas tree in their sanctuary in 1994. Instead of a tree decked with tinsel, lights and ornaments, 40 miniature replicas of cluster bomblets, known as bombies, hung from the branches. With each $10 donation to MCC's bomb removal project in Laos, a bombie was removed from the tree and replaced with a dove. Residents of Xieng Khouang Province "should be able to live without fear of being dismembered or killed by bombs dropped more than 20 years ago," noted East Asia Secretary Ann Martin. In just two weeks the Christmas tree was transformed.

Fruits of the peace process in the Middle East, however, came slowly; peace had not arrived for many Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by year-end; some in fact were worse off—economically and politically. Both the demolition of Palestinian homes and confiscation of Palestinian land by Israel escalated in 1994.

MCC celebrated the 20th anniversary of Victim-Offender Mediation in 1994. The idea of restoring offenders rather than only punishing them was born in 1974 when Dave Worth of MCC Ontario and Mark Yantzi, a Mennonite probation officer, persuaded a judge to permit two youth charged with vandalizing 22 homes in Elmira, Ont., to meet their victims and pay for damages. Today Victim-Offender programs are offered in 200 communities in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. And the idea has also expanded to include neighborhood dispute resolution and conflict resolution in schools, businesses and churches.

Bethel Mennonite Church

Survivors of abuse attended an MCC-sponsored workshop focusing on healing and worship. Canadian and U.S. congregations dedicated a Sunday in February for mourning and repenting of violence in Christian homes. They used materials created by Women's Concerns.

Families in Winnipeg entered 1995 better equipped to deal with their conflicts, thanks to a 1994 grant received by Winnipeg's Mediation Services. "We deal with the results of conflict such as children stealing money from parents, damaging property, making threats and assaults," said Director Janet Schmidt. The grant trained 10 staff and 50 volunteer mediators.

The people *you sent*

The 919 workers who served with MCC during 1994 in 57 countries, including Canada and the United States, enabled your ministry to be high-touch in an increasingly high-tech age.

Our workers are central to our mission. And when they return home to their congregations and families, they bring a new perspective on the world and new ideas about what following Christ means.

This reciprocity and multiplying effect reinforces our belief that people—more than dollars—are the church's best resource.

We believe the best way to be a Christian resource for meeting human need is to place dedicated, qualified, respectful people in communities where people are suffering.

Core MCC qualifications are being a Christian, an active member of a church and committed to non-violent peacemaking.

To make it possible for more Christians to serve, we were at year-end exploring ways to expand the number and types of service opportunities MCC offers.

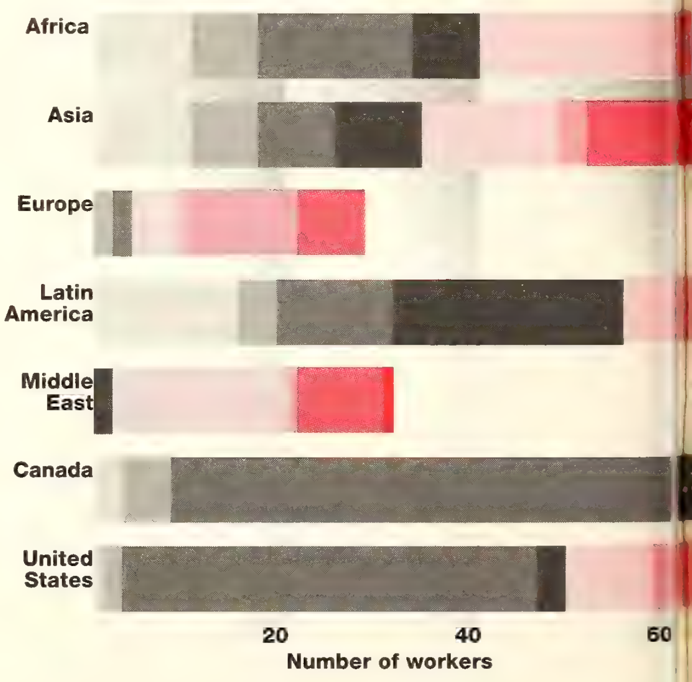
MCC is looking for more people who can resolve conflicts in ways that are appropriate to local cultures in response to requests from church leaders overseas.

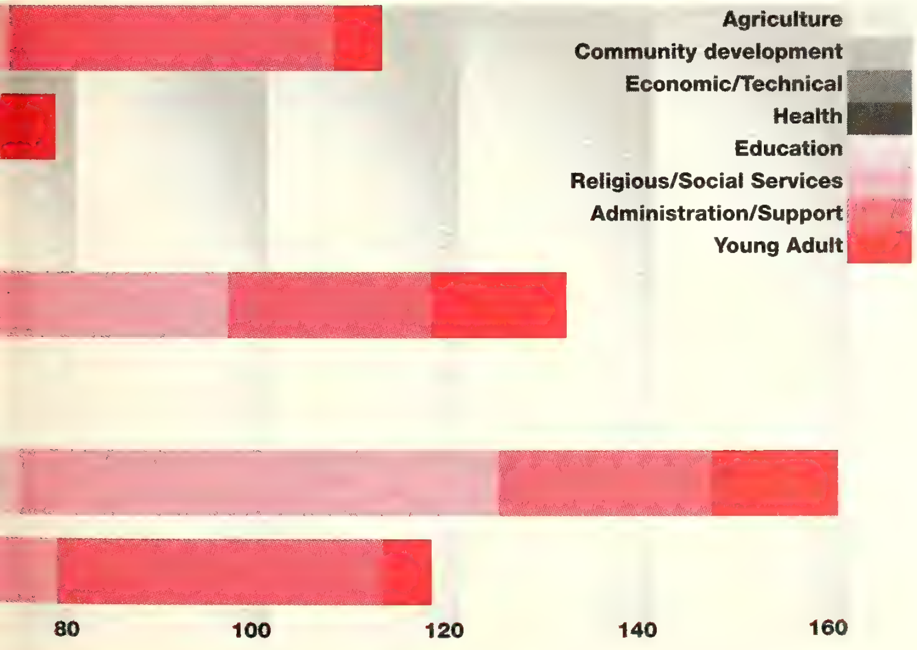
In the United States, MCC joined with two other agencies to start COPA, a short-term urban learning and service program in Chicago. COPA (Chicago Opportunity for Peace in Action) is Spanish for "cup." MCC Canada joined with SOOP—Service Opportunities for Older Persons—a program that links older persons with North American congregations that want short-term volunteers to help them address various needs in their communities.

In 1995 we will be recruiting for 163 new workers—including 55 economic and technical workers, 16 agriculturists, 11 community development workers, 31 teachers, 18 health workers, 32 social service workers—willing to be part of the lifeline that connects us with others in need. Is God calling you to become an MCC service worker?

••• **Dwight McFadden**
MCC Personnel Services

MCC Service Workers
by location and vocation (not salaried staff)





Personnel

in service on 11/30/1994
by Country and Continent

Africa	**112**
Botswana	8
Burkina Faso	14
Chad	5
Ethiopia	2
Kenya	10
Lesotho	7
Mozambique	7
Nigeria	4
Somalia	2
South Africa	4
Sudan	9
Swaziland	5
Tanzania	7
Uganda	9
Zaire	9
Zambia	9
Zimbabwe	1
East Asia	**34**
China	8
Kingdom of Cambodia	11
Laos	1
Taiwan	2
Thailand	3
Vietnam	9
South and Central Asia	**44**
Bangladesh	15
India	2
India/Indonesia YDT*	2
Indonesia	12
Nepal	6
Philippines	7
Europe	**28**
Germany	6
Lithuania	1
Northern Ireland	3
Poland	2
Russia	6
Serbia	2
Switzerland	7
Ukraine	1
Latin America	**131**
Bolivia	31
Brazil	17
Colombia	1
Colombia YDT*	2
Costa Rica	2
El Salvador	12
Guatemala	7
Haiti	13
Honduras	8
Jamaica	12
Mexico	12
Nicaragua	8
Paraguay	5
Uruguay	1
Middle East	**31**
Egypt	18
Jordan	2
Lebanon	2
Syria	2
West Bank	7
North America	**539**
Total U.S. Service Workers	118
Total U.S. Salaried Staff	162
Total Cdn. Service Workers	159
Total Cdn. Salaried Staff	100
Grand Total	**919**

*YDT —Youth Discovery Team

Your dollars *at work*

This summarizes data from seven financial statements in Canada and the United States. Cash and material contributions were only part of the picture. Untold hours of volunteer time were equally vital and enabled MCC to channel 89 percent of income to program.

Income

The various MCC offices received resources valued at $62.6 million Cdn./$47 million U.S. in 1994. The consolidated income chart shows that individuals and congregations provided 53.7 percent of MCC's income. This included cash gifts; gifts-in-kind such as meat, blankets and grain; and funds raised from thrift shops, relief sales, and houses against hunger. The next largest category, grants, includes matching funds from the Canadian International Development Agency for grain purchase by Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The "other" category includes investment income, fees and royalties.

1994 was a year of crisis for people in Rwanda. North Americans, Europeans and Africans responded with cash contributions totaling $2.2 million Cdn./$1.6 million U.S., the largest designated response shared through MCC since Ethiopia's famine in 1984.

Expenses

Total spending was up 3 percent in 1994 because of above-budget expenditures for Rwandan refugees. Even so, resources exceeded expenses because only half the contributions for Rwandan refugees were spent in 1994. The balance will be spent over the next two years.

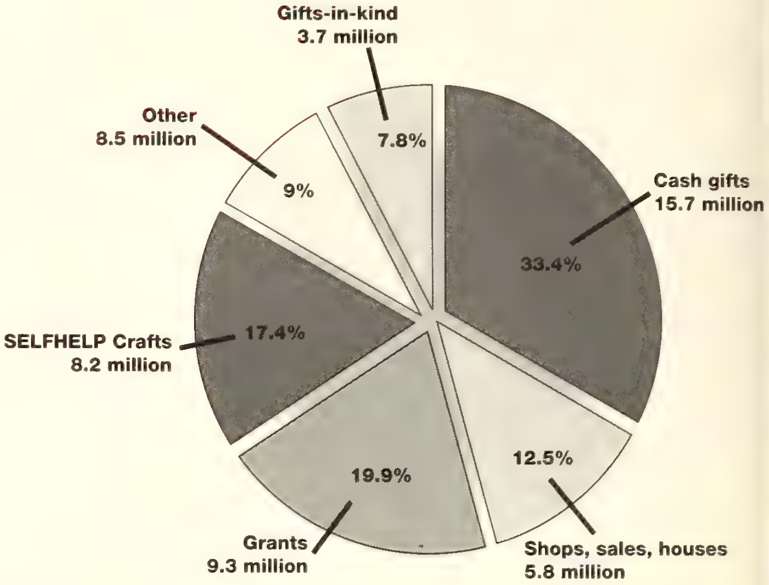
In the consolidated expenses chart, "support and fund-raising" includes costs of internal administration, constituency relations, promotion, personnel recruitment/placement and staff fund-raising efforts. Program administration, whether on the field or at headquarters offices, is included in program costs. "Other overseas" program refers to MCC Peace Office, Visitor Exchange Program and other overseas services.

Audited financial statements may be obtained from the nearest MCC office.

••• **Berry Friesen**
Director of Administration and Resources

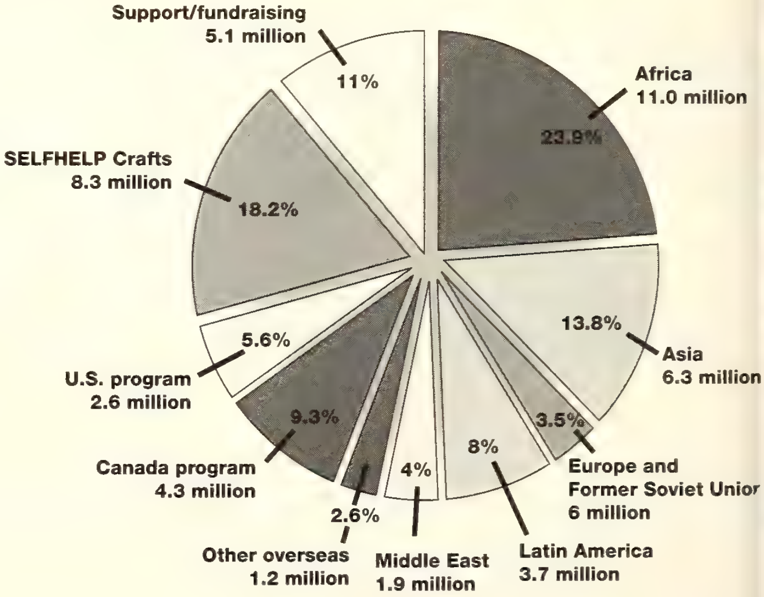
MCC Consolidated Income

$46,926,000 U.S.



MCC Consolidated Expenses

$45,956,000 U.S.



MCC International *

Income

U.S. contributions	8,855,174
Canada contributions*	4,356,960
Other contributions	372,281
Non-governmental grants	1,746,964
Governmental grants	2,596,196
SELFHELP Crafts	5,721,547
Investments earnings	338,594
Workers earning, fees and miscellaneous	644,891
Gifts-in-kind — U.S.	2,256,815
Gifts-in-kind — Canada*	7,835,632
TOTAL	34,725,054

Expenses

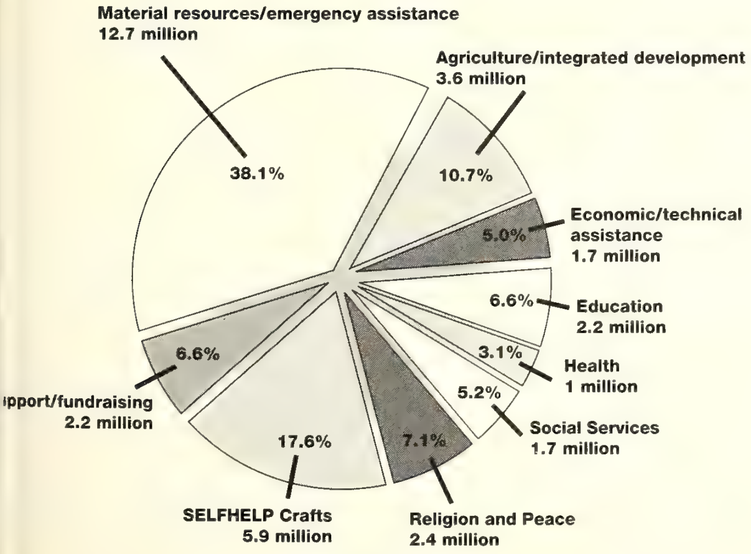
Agriculture & integrated development	3,593,018
Emergency assistance	2,727,889
Economic & technical assistance	1,677,958
Education	2,215,471
Health	1,049,025
Social services	1,736,324
Religious & peace	2,398,574
SELFHELP Crafts	5,915,899
Supporting and fundraising activities	2,219,918
Material resources donated in kind	10,092,447
TOTAL	33,626,523
Excess of income over expenses	1,098,531

** in U.S. dollars*

** report for 12 months ended November 30, 1994*

MCC International Expenses

$33,626,523 U.S.



MCC U.S.**

Income

Contributions	3,404,061
Grant income	4,753
Community Ministries revenue	301,734
Peace and Justice Ministries revenue	96,934
Regional revenue	184,664
Gifts-in-kind	43,887
Constituency Ministries revenue	7,427
TOTAL	4,043,460

Expenses

Community Ministries	944,730
Peace and Justice Ministries	680,479
Material resources donated in kind	43,887
Constituency Ministries	493,961
West Coast MCC	357,519
MCC Central States	464,480
MCC Great Lakes	194,867
MCC East Coast	278,011
Developmental disabilities/mental health	103,200
Executive office	180,066
Support services	293,535
TOTAL	4,034,735
Excess of income over expenses	8,725

*** in U.S. dollars*

*** report for 12 months ended November 30, 1994*

MCC Canada***

Income

Contributions	7,378,338
Grants	
CIDA	3,586,906
Other	317,105
Earned Income	
SELFHELP Crafts	2,820,624
Other	350,894
Material resources/food aid	
Contributions	1,164,987
Grants	4,554,103
Interest and other	827,561
TOTAL	21,000,518

Expenses

Program	
Coordination	348,427
Eastern regions	360,972
Employment development	101,700
Kanadier concerns	428,127
Material resources/food aid	6,032,601
Overseas forwardings	9,541,960
Native concerns	217,317
SELFHELP Crafts	2,671,805
Other	569,379
General administration	793,151
TOTAL	21,065,439
Excess of expenses over income	(64,921)

**** in Canadian dollars*

**** report for 12 months ended August 31, 1994*

Lydia and Abigail Kurfman

Celebrating *75 years*

Mennonites in Canada and the United States joined together in 1920 to form Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). MCC's first acts were to send food and 50 tractor-plow outfits to Russia and the Ukraine where revolution and social upheaval were causing famine.

Today, 75 years later, MCC continues this witness by sharing material resources and people so others may enjoy strength for today and hope for tomorrow.

1994 found 919 MCC workers serving in 57 countries. They were not alone in this work. Behind and with them were hundreds of congregations and thousands of contributors who pray, write letters, clerk at thrift stores and donate time, meat, wheat and school kits. Some toured Oregon by bike to raise money.

In August Lydia and Abigail Kurfman, Ephrata, Pa., shared their birthday money and emptied a savings account to give to Rwandan refugee children. In Winnipeg, two 10-year-old girls published their own newspaper, sold it to friends and relatives and raised $50 for Rwandan refugees.

So how will MCC celebrate these 75 years? We will tell stories of God's watchful care and of the faithfulness of those who have responded to human suffering since 1920. We will reflect on how to serve others "In the name of Christ" in a day when self-centeredness, overflowing schedules and aloneness, as well as suffering and chaos, challenge the world.

We will also renew our commitment to placing qualified, dedicated Christians around the world to share for us the biblical cup of cold water. We need them to share not only the water but also warm hands, compassion-filled faces and our commitments to challenging the systems that create and prolong suffering.

••• **John A. Lapp**
MCC executive secretary

Giving projects

•••

(April) Global Church Sharing Fund: More Mennonites and Brethren in Christ now live in Africa, Asia and Latin America than in Europe and North America. MCC is contributing $824,700 Cdn./$600,000 U.S. to a global sharing fund to share resources throughout the church. Send a contribution for the fund to MCC, marked for project #5000-7003.

(May) Beehives for Vietnam: MCC helps farmers in northern Vietnam increase their incomes by raising bees. With an MCC loan, they can buy bees, hives and beekeeping equipment. MCC also gives technical support. $5.50 Cdn./$4 U.S. buys basic beekeeping tools. $15 Cdn./$11 U.S. buys a beehive. Please include project #1722-1039 with your contribution.

(June) Sewing cooperative: In 1993 single mothers in La Linea, a community by the railroad tracks just outside El Salvador's capital, formed a sewing cooperative with help from MCC and the local Baptists. They piece quilts and sew comforters, pillow covers and T-shirts to sell. In 1995 they will build a room to replace the hut where they now work. $185 Cdn./$135 U.S. raises the walls a foot. $550 Cdn./$400 U.S. puts on the roof. Please include project #913-3000 with your contribution.

Material resource projects

•••

(April) Lightweight children's clothing: MCC is collecting clothing for children in boarding schools in the West Bank. Sizes for ages 6 to 16 are especially needed; for boys, shirts and trousers; for girls, dresses, blouses and skirts. Clothing should be clean and in good condition.

•••

(May) Health kits: 5,000 kits are needed for poor people in Upper Egypt. MCC works with church-based agencies providing health, education and employment services. Call a nearby MCC office for a list of health kit contents.

•••

(June) Fabric: Bolts of cloth are requested for use where quality fabric is expensive or hard to find. The fabric is used to sew girls' and boys' clothing in Haiti, Nicaragua and the West Bank. Cotton, cotton blends, cotton polyester mixes are useful. No 100 percent polyester fabric, please.

Mennonite
Central
Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9

Please include the following information with all contributions for Contact giving projects:

Name of project:

Your name:

Address:

Conference or church affiliation:

Project no.

News

Missionaries give account of Kobe earthquake

Etsuko and Russell Sawatsky are General Conference missionaries in Kobe, Japan. Together they wrote this account of the earthquake that hit Kobe Jan. 17 and its immediate aftermath.

Kobe, Japan, Jan. 30 (GCMC)—At 5:46 a.m. on Jan. 17, we were awakened by a jolt from one of the strongest earthquakes to hit Japan since 1923. The whole house was jumping up and down and the earth seemed to be roaring. Fear and panic crowded out every thought. We were absolutely helpless.

When the quaking finally subsided, the safety of our children became our first concern. Etsuko checked on Aaron, our 18-month-old. Russell ran downstairs to shut off the gas outlet to our heater and came back up to check on our girls—Rika, 7, Keila, 5, and Aisha, 4.

Aaron was still asleep. Aisha, convinced that it was a particularly bad thunderstorm, had her head buried under the covers. But Rika and Keila were awake and anxious. After we talked with them, they calmed down.

Then, with it cold and dark outside, no gas or electricity to warm us, and the house apparently as strong as ever, we went back to our bedroom. As we talked, we were interrupted by all-too-frequent aftershocks.

Eventually, morning came. Nothing seemed to be terribly amiss outside.

Cost of the quake

More than 5,000 people died and more than 300,000 became homeless when the earthquake of Jan. 17 hit Kobe. Measuring 7.2 on the Richter scale, the quake damaged more than 41,000 buildings, doing an estimated $64 billion U.S. in damage.

Japan
HOKKAIDO
HONSHU
Tokyo
Kobe
Osaka
SHIKOKU
KYUSHU

Inside, a lot of things had tumbled onto the floor, and a few cups and glasses had been shattered when they fell out of our kitchen cabinet. But there was no serious damage.

We borrowed a radio from a neighbor and discovered that the earthquake had registered 7.2 on the Richter scale and was centered under Awaji Island, which is easily visible from the second floor of our home.

No one expected a major earthquake in this area of Japan. Indeed, when our assignment to Kobe was confirmed, we were glad that it was not near the earthquake-prone Tokyo area. Our security was based on a widely held myth. The Hanshin area, which includes Kobe and Osaka, has several fault lines.

Takeji Nomura, pastor of the Kobe Mennonite Church, and his daughter Orie came over to our house to check on us. They had been unable to reach us by phone, even though they live only a 10-minute walk away. He told us that his family was safe, even though their house was a little messed up.

At about 9 a.m. the electricity came back on. We sat in front of our television, transfixed, as the extent of the damage to Awaji Island, Kobe and the neighboring cities was presented to us.

As the day wore on and people became aware of the extent of the damage, stores were inundated with shoppers stocking up on food. Line-ups were everywhere, and stores were virtually emptied.

We also found ourselves without running water by the end of day one. The next day, however, we were able to fill a 40-liter ice chest with water supplied at Rika's elementary school

Inside the news

MDS trainee from Japan called home to rebuild / p. 16

Toronto churches exhibit new initiatives / p. 16

Missionaries to South Africa report on change / p. 17

Water brings hope in Cambodia / p. 18

San Francisco Chinese Mennonite Church celebrated its 14th anniversary on Nov. 13, 1994.

● ● ●

Douglas A. Penner of Newton, Kan., is the preferred candidate for president of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. The search committee will recommend Penner to the college's board of directors in March for their consideration and possible approval. Penner is currently executive director of the Associated Colleges of Central Kansas, based in McPherson.

● ● ●

Rich Howard-Willms decided to turn a negative into a positive when $7 was stolen from the countertop collection box at Plowsharing Crafts, a store sponsored by the St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship that sells Self-Help Crafts products that provide income for Third World artisans. The money was intended for children separated or lost from their parents during Rwanda's recent turmoil. Howard-Willms began a campaign, "From $7 to ? — Helping the Refugees of Rwanda." He wrote letters to the mayor, chief of police, store volunteers, area merchants and local Mennonites, explaining what had happened and encouraging donations containing the number 7, such as $7, $17, $70. At the end of December 1994, Howard-Willms sent a check for $1,843.94 to Mennonite Central Committee for Rwandan refugee children. Concerned people had given more than $900, and Plowsharing Crafts had matched the amount.

The date for the Aid to Christian Teaching weekend sponsored by the Northern District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Iowa/Nebraska Conference of the Mennonite Church has been changed from March 24-26 to Nov. 17-19. Contact Ken Hawkley (316) 283-5100.

• • •

A campus meeting replaced the usual January telephone conference as the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary board grappled with issues of new leadership for AMBS following the death of Marlin Miller, the seminary's president, Nov. 3, 1994. The board began the process of naming a search committee for the office of president and clarifying its assignment. The board also affirmed two priorities for seminary finances: balance the budget for this fiscal year and concentrate on the components of the Partners for Ministry comprehensive campaign, which will undergird the operating finances for the seminary.

• • •

Three of the Mennonite Church's five major program agencies and Greencroft, Inc., have decided to sell the 500 South Main Street building in Elkhart, Ind., which has housed their central offices for the past 20 years. The building also holds some 65 senior citizen residents and commercial tenants. The owners include Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and Mennonite Board of Education, with a combined Elkhart staff of 73. Some building residents have life-lease contracts, and they will be offered similar retirement housing in other Greencroft properties or given a "good deal" on a buyout, according to Gene E. Yoder, president and CEO of Greencroft. Some residents have been renting their apartments. Greencroft has assigned a staff advocate to each resident to help them consider their options.

Wreckage: *Earthquake damage to Kobe's infrastructure is estimated at $64 billion U.S.*

by a Japanese Self-Defense Force unit. We learned that one of Rika's teachers was killed in the quake.

For six days we were without running water and had to rely on emergency supplies. It was a remarkably precious commodity at the time, and even the wastewater from washing our faces or dishes was saved in buckets to be used to flush our toilets.

Of course, a bath was out of the question. One man at an evacuation center, after finally being able to have his first bath in 10 days, said, "If the earthquake was hell, this bath was heaven. It would be OK to die now."

Even though we have experienced a few inconveniences, our problems are nothing compared with the evacuees. A friend from Etsuko's high school days, her husband and their two small children, were buried in their house when it collapsed. They managed to climb out from under the rubble. Their home burned to the ground.

Another friend, who lives just east of Kobe, no longer has a home either. Her view of the world has changed. "It is as though nature were laughing at us," she said.

All of the Kobe church people are fine. The Kobe Mennonite Church's Babacho meeting place is located in one of the worst hit areas. The church lost most of its roof tiles, has several prominent cracks on inside and outside walls and no longer sits "square" on the property. But other places suffered much worse damage.

Out of necessity, people are more open to each other, more accepting of help when it is offered and more willing to help when they can. For example, while the water supply was still off, a neighbor we had never talked to before offered us surplus

Mennonite churches in the Kobe area

There is one Mennonite church in Kobe, Kobe Mennonite Church. The church, with 30 members and two meeting places, is affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The Japan Mennonite Brethren Church conference of 26 churches has three churches within a few miles of the quake's epicenter. One student affiliated with Semboku MB Church south of Osaka died in the quake. Wataru Mori, 22, was a student at the University of Kobe. His parents are members of Semboku Church.

Mukogawa MB Church, near the eastern edge of the damaged area, is serving as a disaster relief center, with some 20 workers stationed there. Mennonite youth volunteers have participated in bicycle and motorcycle teams to deliver relief supplies. A Japanese Mennonite youth group has distributed donated materials and is cooking hot meals for some 120 residents of a temporary camp in a city park.

Cleanup on hold

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Relief groups in Japan's Kobe-Osaka area are waiting to see what their next steps will be.

In a Feb. 9 fax, former MCC exchange visitor Kazuo Akamatsu (see story on page 16) reports that three weeks after the quake about 200,000 people were still in shelters, most located in schools. "Not a small number of people live in tents as well," he writes.

Akamatsu also reports that coordination of volunteer groups is poor. "No meeting of the various volunteer groups took place until three days ago. As a result, donations are being distributed unevenly according to the power and status of the volunteer group working at a given camp, and also according to the amount of TV coverage," Akamatsu writes.

Japanese Mennonites report reconstruction may need to await new government guidelines for building in earthquake zones. Residents still have not been given permission to start rebuilding their homes.

Japanese Mennonite Brethren are discussing involvement in meeting victims' emotional and spiritual needs. They are deferring to the General Conference Mennonite church in Kobe and the Japanese Mennonite Emergency Relief Committee to determine long-range relief plans.

Volunteer help has been offered from Mennonites in Taiwan, Hong Kong and the United States, but it may take some time before volunteers can be used.

The General Conference Mennonite Church has given $5,000 U.S. toward relief efforts. Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Disaster Service have given $20,000 U.S., and Mennonite Brethren Board of Missions and Service has given $10,000 U.S.

water she had collected. "You have a lot of children, you need it," she said.

The media reported that Japanese were open to the Chinese and Korean communities in Kobe in a way that had not been witnessed before. In contrast, during the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923, a rumor was spread that the Koreans were poisoning the wells.

There is a lot of criticism of the government for lack of coordinated relief effort, but also a lot of appreciation for the volunteers who have come forward. Goodwill seems to be the prevailing mood this time.

The aftershocks have decreased over the last two weeks. But each time they come our hearts pound, our breathing stops and we stay frozen where we are. The experts predict a major aftershock measuring up to 6 on the Richter scale. It could happen today, maybe four months from now or perhaps not at all.

In the busyness of daily life, we often forget about our vulnerability as human beings. For the last two weeks, daily life has been little else but a reminder of that vulnerability. In this kind of situation, we are especially grateful for the prayers of support and expressions of concern that have come our way.
Russell and Etsuko Sawatsky

Collapse: *A parking lot near the Sawatskys' house*

Health professionals and those interested in health care are invited to the annual Mennonite Health Assembly March 23-26 in Washington. Funds are available to assist congregations wishing to send a member to the conference. Scholarships are also available for college and medical school students. Contact Dean Preheim-Bartel at (800) 348-7468.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Board of Missions are investing in a house situated on the dividing line between Catholic and Protestant Belfast. Coils of razor wire top the wall at the back of the house that divides the city. Joe Campbell, MCC/MBM worker in Ireland, says, "To purchase a house at this location at this time is like Jeremiah purchasing land in Israel, even as the people were being taken into exile. We are purchasing this house as a sign of hope. People need to see that some are willing to take the risk of peace." The house will be home to MCC workers John and Naomi Lederach, who are in Northern Ireland working at peace, reconciliation and healing ministries in the city.

• • •

Marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, the Japan Mennonite Christian Church Conference in Hokkaido chose the theme of repentance for its annual peace seminar Jan. 15-16 in Sapporo. Tadeo Iwabuchi, who served in the Japanese Imperial Forces in Manchuria during the war, shared his experience of being imprisoned for many months because of secret warfare activities he had witnessed. He said that he had decided a few years ago to tell the truth about his experiences. As a result, he is now the target of hate mail, phone calls and sometimes physical blows. But he said he believes Japan must face up to its past as aggressor and show true repentance to other Asian peoples. "Instead of saying 'Japan! Japan!' we must come to see ourselves as part of the world's human race."

The Fresno (Calif.) Victim Offender Reconciliation Program is helping sponsor training to prepare church groups to start VORP projects in their communities. The training will be held March 29-31 in Fresno. Sponsors of the training event include the Center for Conflict Studies and Peacemaking at Fresno Pacific College, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. and West Coast MCC. For information call Kathy Stück, (800) 909-VORP.

• • •

Registration forms are now available for adults and youth for Wichita '95, the joint conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church in Wichita, Kan., July 25-30. The registration forms for both adults and youth were mailed to churches in Canada and the United States in January. Those people who send in their registration forms by May 31 will receive a discount on their registration fee.

• • •

Israelis and Palestinians are proving they can cooperate effectively on one thing: auto theft. Reporting from Gaza, Mark Dennis writes that the streets of Gaza are jammed with shiny new cars stolen from Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. "Every [Palestinian] car seller has an Israeli partner," says an unnamed Palestinian who has been in the business eight years. Even Israeli soldiers have gotten involved; two were formally charged in January with smuggling scores of cars into Gaza. Gaza Deputy Police Chief Mahmoud Asfour admits most of Gaza's police cars were originally stolen from Israel. "The people consider these cars their right—because the Israelis stole everything from our people," he says. (*Newsweek*)

MDS trainee called home to Japan

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—When 27-year-old Kazuo Akamatsu came to the United States last year to learn how Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) operates, little did he suspect his knowledge would be needed in his country so soon.

Akamatsu

Akamatsu and fellow church members of Yu-Ai Mennonite Church in Sapporo have been wanting to start a Christian disaster service for some time. The island of Hokkaido, on which Sapporo is located, experiences occasional hurricanes and an average of two earthquakes yearly, Akamatsu says. Several active volcanos are also on the island.

In 1993, several Yu-Ai Church members traveled to Okushiri Island, off Hokkaido's coast, to assist earthquake victims.

"We have no official or private organization to help organize volunteers who want to assist after accidents such as earthquakes and volcanic activity," says Akamatsu, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees in mining geology from Hokkaido University.

Thus when Akamatsu applied to Mennonite Central Committee's International Visitor Exchange Program, he mentioned interest in learning about MDS. Since last September Akamatsu has worked alongside MDS volunteers in Los Angeles, repairing earthquake damage, and in Liberty, Texas, and Albany, Ga., cleaning up from floods. He has also spent several weeks at MDS headquarters in Akron, getting an overview of its administration.

Scheduled to go to Goshen, Ind., in February to work at a home for people with developmental disabilities, Akamatsu has instead returned to Japan to help coordinate Japanese Mennonite relief efforts in the Kobe-Osaka area.

Correction
to the Mennonite Central Committee 1994 Annual Report

On page 14 of the MCC 1994 Annual Report inserted in this issue of *The Mennonite*, the pie chart in the top right-hand corner titled "MCC Consolidated Income (1994) $46,926,000 U.S." should read: Gifts-in-kind 3.7 million, 7.8%; Cash gifts **13.9** million, **29.7%**; Shops, sales, houses **7.6** million, **16.2%**; Government grants 9.3 million, 19.9%; Self-Help Crafts 8.2 million, 17.4%; Other **4.2** million, 9.0%.

Toronto area named next City on a Hill

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Mennonite churches in the greater Toronto area, in partnership with the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC), will receive a $20,000 U.S. grant for use in 1995 from the General Conference Mennonite Church City on a Hill project.

The project, begun last year, designates money and staff support to one cluster of Mennonite churches each year in order to recognize and encourage local initiative. City on a Hill grew out of the Abraham and Sarah project, which aims to start 50 new churches by 2001.

New initiatives in the Toronto area include a group working on a house church, another that is planning monthly Anabaptist worship services, and others who are interested in finding ways to relate to the homeless.

"Overseas mission is coming to our doorsteps," says Hugo Neufeld, mission minister for MCEC. "Many people who have had contact with Mennonites in other countries have moved to the greater Toronto area. I think the churches here have welcomed people from different cultures and seen this as an opportunity."

Frank and Heather Liao are giving leadership to the North York (Ont.) Taiwanese Church, which had its first worship service in October 1994. The Liaos had contact with Mennonites in Taiwan and Argentina. Last fall the Cambodian Christian Centre, led by Sovaro Meas, joined MCEC as an emerging church.

Church planter Boris Sithideth plans

to begin a Bible study group to reach out to Laotians. About 200 Laotians attended a Christmas celebration last year at the meeting place of the Mississauga Mennonite Fellowship.

The church-planting efforts in the Toronto area exemplify what is happening in all parts of MCEC.

> **"There is a growing awareness in MCEC that we are becoming increasingly multicultural."**
>
> ***Hugo Neufeld***

According to Neufeld, of the 26 churches that have joined the conference since 1980, 17 are English-speaking, one French-speaking and eight are Spanish, Hmong, Chinese, Cambodian or Laotian.

"There is a growing awareness in MCEC that we are becoming increasingly multicultural," he said. "The challenge is that we have all these new stories in the conference. We have to find new ways of thinking about everything from our history to our worship patterns to how we make decisions at conference. Already this reality is moving us into some exciting new territory."

Missionaries report on struggles in South Africa

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—It hasn't been easy for South Africa to make the transition to a democracy after decades of apartheid, according to Gary and Jean Isaac, mission workers with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"The needs are overwhelming, and there isn't enough money to go around. So many areas are underdeveloped," said Gary in an interview here Jan. 25.

Umtata, South Africa, where the Isaacs live, is a case in point. Located in the former homeland of Transkei, this city is struggling to provide basic services to its residents.

Jean and Gary Isaac

The Isaacs noted that strikes for better wages by city employees and others are frequent. At times the main access roads into Umtata have been blocked by buses and cars that are guarded by armed individuals.

"There is no traffic control. No one puts money anymore in the meters. There is double and triple parking on the streets," said Jean.

Many of the medical facilities are not up to standard either. Several pharmaceutical companies have stopped sending medical supplies to the hospitals because the hospitals have not paid their past bills.

"So, for example, when one of our older church members needed cataract surgery, the hospital did not have the necessary medicine," said Jean.

About 10 percent of the nurses left the region when they did not receive the promised wage increase to bring their salaries on par with nurses in the rest of the country. Twenty doctors have left as well.

Still, the Isaacs, who work with the African Independent Churches (AIC), said their South African friends are "happy and excited" about the end of apartheid. "Before, they were afraid to talk about politics. Now they are not afraid to express their viewpoints," said Gary.

However, the Isaacs said their South African friends don't have unrealistic expectations about how long it will take for South Africa to change. Some have even expressed uncertainty and fear about whether a black government can govern well, particularly as they look at the political problems in other African countries, said Gary.

"Much of the feeling of black inadequacy is the legacy of apartheid," said Gary. "The government believes that education is the key to changing people's attitudes." As a result, there are plans to provide free education through sixth grade and possibly through high school.

The members of the African Independent Churches don't have much visibility or credibility in South Africa. "The press doesn't say much about the African Independent Churches unless

Dr. Roland P. Brown, North Newton, Kan., recently received Taiwan's highest civilian award in recognition of 40 years of service to the Taiwanese people. President Lee Teng-hui awarded Brown the Order of the Brilliant Star with Violet Grand Cordon at the presidential palace in Taipei, Taiwan, Jan. 9. Brown founded and developed the Mennonite Christian Hospital, which has 207 acute-care beds, in Hwalien, Taiwan. Brown and his wife, Sophie, worked in Taiwan with Mennonite Central Committee and then with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. They retired in 1991.

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General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church staff and mission workers presented workshops Jan. 8-29 on the topic of "New Shapes for a Community in Mission" at 15 churches that belong to the Western District Conference. The workshops were designed to complement a Great Plains Seminary class on "The Church in the 21st Century," which was taught by Wilbert Shenk. Shenk is the director of the Mission Training Center at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

• • •

Mennonite youth and young adults will have the opportunity to serve in the following locations this summer through Youth Venture: Manigotagan, Man., Aug. 6-12; Markham, Ont., July 3-14, July 17-28 and Aug. 14-25; Toronto, Aug. 6-12; Portland, Ore., July 16-23; San Antonio, Aug. 13-19; Seattle, July 8-26; Wichita, Kan., June 18-July 1; Montreal, July 29-Aug. 5, Aug. 12-19; Bogota, Colombia, July 23-Aug. 5, and Northern Ireland, July 11-29. Youth Venture is part of Mennonite Service Venture, which is a cooperative program of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. For more information contact Nora Miller, Youth Venture, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 or (316) 283-5100.

Investigators were unable to substantiate any of 12,000 accusations of group ritual satanic abuse examined in a study by the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. The study, directed by Gail Goodman of the University of California at Davis, found that while there is little evidence of abuse by organized satanic groups, there is "convincing evidence" that lone individuals or couples who perpetrate abuse sometimes say they are involved in satanism or use the claim to intimidate victims. The study, the first nationwide attempt to examine reports of ritual abuse, casts doubt on "recovered memories" of such abuse by people in therapy. Beete Bottoms, co-author of the study, insisted that parents with conventional religious beliefs are more likely to be sources of abuse. He said, "Our data indicate that more abuse is occurring in the name of God than in the name of Satan." (*The Christian Leader*)

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Some congressional GOP leaders may be looking for ways to cut back U.S. military spending, reports *The Christian Science Monitor*. It reports Republican commitments to a balanced budget and decreased taxes are pushing many Republicans to look at military cuts. "We have a very strong commitment to get the deficit under control and do it in a way that is credible and leaves Social Security off the budget," says Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.), the Senate Budget Committee chair. "So it seems to me that we're going to have to look at defense carefully." Republican defense cutters will face struggles in their own party. The *Washington Post* notes that the national security restoration portion of the Contract With America promises that Republicans will increase defense spending above the level proposed by President Clinton. Estimates of that proposed increase over Clinton's budget range from $40 billion to $100 billion.

something bad happens—for example, if someone drowns during a baptism in a river," said Gary. "I think the independent churches don't receive much coverage because their leaders are not highly educated."

While AIC leadership may not be highly educated, Gary noted that a Nov. 9, 1994, issue of the *Christian Century* predicted that by the year 2000, African Independent Churches will have more members than all the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches in Africa.

"That prediction may be true already in South Africa," said Gary, adding that "Mennonite work with independent churches helps give credibility to a group of people that has been marginalized.

"In our Bible-teaching program with African Independent Church leaders, we have discussed the biblical concepts of peace, love and democracy and how they relate to the new South Africa. The leaders have agreed that, in this new era, the church should lead people into the way of Jesus, who taught freedom, equality, justice and responsibility."

Clean water means new possibilities in Cambodia

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

The joy of water: *With high spirits Mr. Ime rallies a community to dig a well.*

Mesang, Cambodia (MCC)—With high spirits Mr. Ime, of Mennonite Central Committee Cambodia, rallies a community to dig a well.

Over the past year MCC-hired and -trained Cambodian technicians have drilled more than 250 wells in Mesang district. Mr. Saum Sim, on whose farm the well pictured here is being drilled, says his family previously drank from a pond. Now he dreams of acquiring a pump to irrigate a plot of onions, cabbage, watercress and other vegetables. MCC has begun a program to help farmers buy pumps.

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Tulip Time in Holland	April 18 - May 1	Henry D. Landes, Pieter & Martha Gotwals Postma
European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5 - 21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10 - 26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes
England/Scotland	August 9 - 24	Wilmer Martin & Mary Rittenhouse Schwartrzentruber
Mexico	November 15 - 30	Cal Redekop

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Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

MINISTERS

Gordon Driedger will resign as youth pastor at Ottawa Church in July.

Paul Isaak was installed Feb. 5 as pastor at Deer Creek (Okla.) Church.

David Jones is interim pastor at Manhattan (Kan.) Church.

Betta and **Marlin Kym** have resigned as pastors at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., effective Aug. 31.

Brad Penner will be pastor at Kingman (Kan.) Church beginning March 1.

Harris Waltner, Manhattan (Kan.) Church, retired at the end of January after 42 years of ministry.

WORKERS

Lynne Beth, Church of the Good Samaritans, Holland, Pa., began a three-year MCC term in August 1994 in Akron, Pa., where she works as a warehouse manager for Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Debra Dehn has been named assistant director for foundation and corporate relations for Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Luana Dueck, Nutana Park Church, Saskatoon, is beginning a four-month MCC term in Akron, Pa., where she will work as a packer at Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Peter Dula, Landisville, Pa., and affiliated with Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind., is beginning a six-month MCC term in Burundi, where he will serve as a peace presence volunteer. Dula previously served as a relief worker with Eastern Mennonite Missions in Albania.

Annie Epp, Morden (Man.) Bergthaler Church and Whitewater Church, Boissevain, Man., is beginning a four-month MCC assignment in Ephrata, Pa., where she will work as a returns clerk in the Self-Help Crafts of the World consignment warehouse.

Adella Gingrich, Albany (Ore.) Church, is beginning a four-month MCC term in Ephrata, Pa., as a returns clerk at the consignment warehouse of Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Erin Gundy, First Church, Kitchener, Ont., and First Church, Normal, Ill., began a two-year MCC term in December 1994 in New Hamburg, Ont., where she works as an education and marketing assistant for Self-Help Crafts Canada.

Laura E. Janzen, First Church, Beatrice, Neb., is beginning a four-month MCC term in Ephrata, Pa., as a returns clerk at the consignment warehouse of Self-Help Crafts of the World.

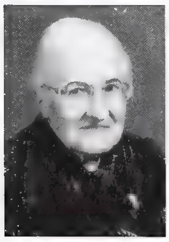
Shauna Leis, Wellesley (Ont.) Church, is beginning a four-month MCC term in Mandeville, Jamaica, where she will work as a service education intern. She will be a math and English tutor at Hanburg Home for Children.

Elsie McDowell, Hagerman Church, Markham, Ont., began a one-year MCC term in July 1994 in Stouffville, Ont., where she works as co-manager of the Care and Share Shoppe.

Beth

Dueck

Epp


Gingrich

Gundy

Janzen

Leis

McDowell

"Transculturally, youth consistently value three things: friendship, freedom and being loved," Don Posterski told attendees of a youth ministry seminar at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., Jan. 13-14. He said the successful youth worker builds rapport with youth by understanding these three values and integrating them with the gospel message. Posterski is vice president of national programs for World Vision—Canada and has written several books on youth ministry.

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Transcontinental Peace Newsletter recognizes Spain as exceptionally friendly to conscientious objectors. An estimated 100,000 conscientious objectors in 1994 equaled almost 50 percent of the number of soldiers in the Spanish army. Objectors need only send a form to the Spanish Minister of Law and fulfill an alternative service requirement for exemption.

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High-tech research is creating a new trend in national defense: nonlethality. Government-funded scientists and engineers are developing devices aimed at incapacitating targets rather than killing. "The entire concept of national security has changed," says John Alexander, member of Los Alamos National Laboratory's Special Technologies group. "Therefore you need other sorts of force options." The new arsenal would include electromagnetic pulse generators and high-powered microwaves to short out communication systems and fry electronics. Computer viruses would infiltrate banking networks and command-and-control operations. The 1995 defense budget includes $41 million in seed money for some of the more promising nonlethal devices. (*Wired*)

Ben & Jerry's has a new CEO, business consultant Robert Holland Jr. The unconventional ice cream company held a contest titled "Yo! I Want to be CEO!" to find him. Applicants were told to submit a 100-word essay and the lid of their favorite Ben & Jerry's flavor. Founders Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield will remain on as chair and co-chair. (*The Christian Science Monitor*)

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The U.S. Secret Service wants to fingerprint welfare applicants to fight fraud. The recommendations respond to a General Accounting Office report on fraud in the $25 billion food-stamp program. An anonymous service official said the agency wants a nationwide system of fingerprinting any applicant for federal aid. An American Civil Liberties Union spokesperson called it a "humiliating" approach and said it would not stop most fraud, which involves not reporting income. (*The Christian Science Monitor*)

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Two Christians in Australia were convicted of manslaughter when their attempted exorcism led to the death of a woman, reports *National & International Religion Report.* Two others, including the woman's husband, received suspended sentences. During a week-long ordeal the four, in addition to praying, applied "rough and unwarranted" physical force on the 49-year-old woman. Doctors said pressure on her carotid artery for four hours when she was held on a chair in intense heat triggered a heart attack that killed her. In New Zealand a Pentecostal couple battered their 12-year-old son to death during an exorcism attempt. They were found not guilty of murder but judged insane. The woman repeatedly struck the boy on the head with a concrete block while her husband held him down. (*Faith Today*)

Charlene and **Dan McNeely**, First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., are beginning three-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa. Charlene will be working as a returns clerk in the consignment warehouse of Self-Help Crafts of the World in Ephrata, Pa., and Dan as a receiving assistant for Self-Help Crafts in Akron.

Beverley Anne Nigh, First Church, Vineland, Ont., is beginning a two-year MCC term in Akron, Pa., where she will work as an administrative secretary for MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries and as receptionist/secretary for MCC U.S.

Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, Peace Community Church, Clovis, Calif., is beginning an 18-month MCC term based in California as a fund-raiser for the MCC Unexploded Ordnance Project in Laos.

Richard Sarkar, Akron (Pa.) Church, began a two-year MCC term in September 1994 in Ephrata, Pa., as manager of Nav Jiwan International Tea Room. He previously served with MCC in Bangladesh.

Nola Kiemer Schmidt, Beth El Church, Milford, Neb., and **Rudy Schmidt**, Tabor Church, Goessel, Kan., are serving three-month MCC terms January-March in Akron, Pa. Nola is working as a clerk at Self-Help Crafts of the World and Rudy in maintenance with Self-Help Crafts.

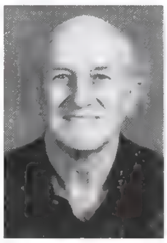
Florence Snyder, Shantz Church, Baden, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in October 1994 in New Hamburg, Ont., co-managing a thrift store.

C. McNeely

D. McNeely

Nigh

Ruth-Heffelbower


N. Schmidt

R. Schmidt

Snyder

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **Washington Office legislative associate for international affairs** (Washington, D.C.). This two-year position is available in August as a local service or salaried position. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have a background in U.S. foreign policy issues, working in coalitions, and communications and research skills. Previous MCC or overseas experience preferred. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

Interested people contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. Applications due **March 17**.

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Winter conference for business professionals and entrepreneurs will be held in Phoenix March 16-20. The General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring events which include fellowship, learning, golf and food! You'll learn to know how others in business handle success and problems. Participants will share how a relationship with the church can help in business and how your leadership can enhance your church and conference.

Call or write Gary Franz for a brochure: **(316) 283-5100** or **General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347**.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **disabilities and mental illness program coordinator** to advocate for and with people with disabilities and mental illness in the context of the church. Responsible to facilitate education and consultation to Anabaptist-related churches for the purpose of helping them build communities of inclusion and acceptance.

Candidate must be an active member of an Anabaptist-related congregation, have three years' experience in disabilities and/or mental health, have proven management and organizational skills and be able and willing to travel up to 25 percent of time. College degree in human service-related field is strongly desired.

If interested, send résumé to **MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527**.

Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., requires a full-time **associate pastor for pastoral care and Christian education**. Primary responsibilities include leadership in Christian education, teaching and enabling laity in doing pastoral care, visitation and counseling, involvement in worship and some preaching. Applicants should have M.Div. or equivalent. Pastoral experience is preferred. Bethel Mennonite Church is an urban congregation of approximately 575 members with three pastors on their pastoral team.

Send résumés and references **by March 15** to **Irma Fast Dueck, Associate Pastor Search Committee, Bethel Mennonite Church, 870 Carter Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3M 2E2; fax (204) 453-3952**.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary invites applications for a **voluntary service couple**. One person needed to do nontechnical maintenance; second person to do combination of child care, library work, secretarial work, hosting and cooking. Short- and long-term positions available.

Contact **Virgil Claassen by April 10 at AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999; (219) 296-6204**. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for a **Self-Help Crafts buyer** (Akron, Pa.). This salaried position is available July 1. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must be committed to Self-Help Crafts' mission, have cross-cultural communications skills and be available to travel six to eight weeks per year.

Interested people in the United States contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. Interested people in Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 269-9875**. Applications due **April 10**.

Program coordinator/care provider, full-time salaried position available at **Agape Respite Care**, Berne, Ind. Administrative tasks and care-giving for people with disabilities. Training provided.

Send résumé or call **Roberta Lehman, Agape Respite Care, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; (219) 589-3351**.

Goshen College seeks faculty for a full-time, continuing position in **accounting**. Responsibilities include teaching lower- and upper-level accounting courses, relating to local accounting and business firms and, where needed, teaching microcomputer applications courses. CPA and accounting experience expected, master's degree expected, with preference given to applicants with doctorate or master's in accounting. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send résumé and three professional references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. Applications will be received until the position is filled. If you have further questions, call John Nyce at (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.

Spruce Lake Retreat, a Mennonite retreat center and camp in northeastern Pennsylvania, has two positions open:

- **Maintenance assistant**—year-round, salaried position beginning as soon as possible
- **General assistant**—year-round, salaried position combining waitressing, housekeeping and some kitchen work or dishwashing, depending on ability and interest; beginning as soon as possible

Contact **Paul Beiler, RR #1, Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; (717) 595-7505**.

The Brethren Home and Cross Keys Village, a CCRC located in New Oxford, Pa., is seeking applicants for the position of **president**. The 200-acre campus of the Brethren Home, with 850 residents, is located in southcentral Pennsylvania. The candidate should be a licensed nursing home administrator or eligible to be licensed, demonstrate proven managerial skills, relate well to residents, staff, board and community. Must be able to nurture a Christian atmosphere and have an appreciation for the beliefs of the Church of the Brethren.

If you meet these qualifications, please send your résumé to **Presidential Search, P.O. Box 3625, York, PA 17402.**

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Reviews

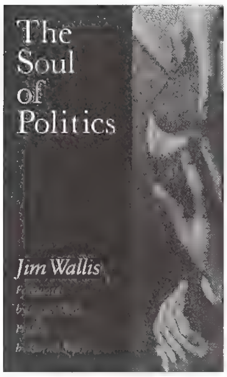
BOOKS

MORAL POLITICS?

The Soul of Politics *by Jim Wallis (New Press and Orbis Books, 1994, $19.95 U.S., 275 pages)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

Almost 20 years ago I read a sheaf of books that changed my life's direction. Being exposed to Anabaptist thinking shifted my perspective on social issues and consequently career choices.



One book that affected me then was *Agenda for Biblical People* by Jim Wallis. I often went back to it, citing it in university papers and sermons. Wallis is a founder of *Sojourners*, both the community and the magazine. Wallis and the Sojourners community continue to promote an alternative vision of faith and politics, blending evangelical passion, Christian spirituality and radical social commitment.

Wallis' *The Soul of Politics* is an excellent summary of his understanding of the political scene today. Regular *Sojourners* readers will recognize many of his anecdotes and analyses.

Wallis begins with a recognition that the world is a mess: "The world isn't working. Things are unraveling, and most of us know it." The politics of both left and right have failed dismally. He speaks in particular of inner-city racism, crime, poverty and blight. This he knows—the Sojourners community has lived in inner-city Washington for 20 years.

Their community is a particular irony: just a few blocks from the center of the world's most powerful nation are seemingly irredeemable problems. Poverty, racism, crime, hunger and discrimination are only getting worse. "Our disintegrating inner cities," Wallis writes, "are but the domestic sign of a global economy that is unraveling."

He is also skeptical about how democratic we are. "Most of the really important choices about the way our society is run never come up for a vote. There simply are no political referenda on the economic decisions that most directly affect our way of life. Electoral politics usually concerns the details after the big decisions already have been made in places carefully shrouded from political debate."

Wallis writes with the passion of a prophet. In biblical fashion, he sees all this bad news as potential good news. By not putting trust in princes, as the psalmist warns, we can look beyond crises. All around us there are also signs of hope. Wallis cites such changes as the fall of the Iron Curtain, the coming of democracy to South Africa and the national network of inner-city gang leaders working for reconciliation.

This book is filled with stories of inspiration, personal responsibility, courage and corporate witness. Rather than giving in to cynicism, he invites us to resist the politics of power and return to the soul of politics, renew the relationship between politics and morality. Thus Wallis elevates biblical values: compassion, community, concern for creation, racial reconciliation, gender equality, justice, imagination, vision, joy and prayer. *The Soul of Politics* is inspiring and exciting and just may change a few lives.

SCHOOLS' LOSS OF FAITH

The Soul of the American University *by George M. Marsden (Oxford University Press, 1994, 448 pages)*

Reviewed by Marion Deckert, North Newton, Kan.

In this book Marsden explores the changing role of religion in the American university. The exploration takes the form of a history of the great American universities and the leaders who shaped them. Little is said about the smaller state and private colleges. The thesis of the book is expressed in its subtitle: "From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief."

There is much in the story that is fascinating: the shift from British models to German models; the early struggle between the Anglicans, Presbyterians and Unitarians; the rise of the Methodists and the Baptists; fear of Catholicism; the place of Jefferson, Dewey and Hutchins. All of this and more is sifted for clues to the causes of the establishment of nonbelief.

TULIP TIME IN HOLLAND
April 18 to May 1, 1995

Our Dutch Mennonite tour leaders, Pieter and Martha Gotwals Postma, will welcome you at the height of the spring flower season. By boat, bike (if you like) and motorcoach, they will introduce you to their homeland, from the Delta to Friesland.

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Vienna: Music & Culture	May 30 - June 13	Wilbur Maust
European Health Care	July 3-18	Joseph G. Landis & Aldred Neufeldt
European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5-21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10-26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes

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The forces that drive an institution of higher education away from a specifically Christian mission are many and powerful. Political realities press the institution to meet the needs of the state for social harmony and national progress. Economic realities force the school to appeal broadly for students and money. Increasing emphasis on professionalism and technology makes religion seem less relevant to the educational task. The rise of positivism, historicism and subjectivist perspectives erode confidence in religion. Faculty commitments to free and open inquiries strengthen ideals of tolerance and diversity.

These political, economic, cultural and even religious forces take many forms. Marsden succeeds in showing how powerful, subtle and inevitable these forces have been. He also details the various partial solutions and way stations to a nearly complete loss of religious mission. The result is that the university maintains a kind of religious aura in which the whole nation becomes the church, and religion is reduced to belief in character, democracy and freedom.

As the society becomes more diverse, the university changes from a specifically churchly vision to a nonsectarian Protestantism, then to a Judeo-Christian stance, and finally to a kind of generalized religion of humanity—"the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God." First the priority of Christ and the doctrine of salvation gives way to more emphasis on the Old Testament and the doctrine of God; then moral philosophy displaces theology as the keystone of education. Ultimately anything that remains of religion other than rational morality is thought of as private piety without educational import.

The irony of this in Marsden's view is that the forces that have worked against a Christian establishment have led to the establishment of nonreligion. The exclusion of all religious perspectives privileges the nonreligious. He argues that it is inevitable that a worldview will be implied or taught and that there is no reason why a purely secular point of view should be given priority over a more religious point of view.

The small church college is not part of Marsden's story. Unfortunately, this does not provide any comfort for those of us committed to the importance of church colleges. Small church colleges are subject to all of the secularizing forces detailed by Marsden. Anyone concerned about the future of Christian higher education can profit by reading this book.

THE FUTURE OF MISSION

God's Call to Mission *by David W. Shenk (Herald Press, 1994, 229 pages)*

Reviewed by Verney Unruh, Newton, Kan.

For those who are wondering whether there is still a future for missions, this book provides an answer.

The author, director of overseas missions for Eastern Mennonite Missions of Salunga, Pa., is well qualified to write about missions and church planting. He grew up in Tanzania as an "MK" ("missionary kid"). While a college student, he was involved in church planting in mountain congregations of Virginia. After two years in voluntary service in New York City he served as a missionary in Africa for 16 years, 10 years among Muslims in Somalia and six years in Kenya. He has traveled in all six continents, giving him a broad view of mission work.

God's Call to
mission
Foreword by
Leighton Ford
DAVID W. SHENK

Shenk describes mission "from the perspective of the Bible. ... It is a confession of faith in God's call to mission" and is a "call for mission to engage cultures gently."

The first five chapters explore the biblical foundations for mission. Abraham and Sarah responded to God's call and became the first missionaries. God's call then came to Israel to be a light to the nations. In the New Testament, God's mission is further revealed in the sending of Jesus Christ, who in turn called his followers to be witnesses. The church was formed as "a sign of the presence of the kingdom of God among the nations."

Shenk then gives an overview of our world today and presents the challenges facing the church as it seeks to carry out God's mission in our global village. The four pillars of mission are listed as prayer, plan, partner and praise.

Issues facing the church are these:

- pluralism: Is Christ the only way to God?
- contextualization: How can we incarnate the gospel so it will be understood in any culture?
- the disparity of wealth: How can missionaries from wealthy countries preach to poor people?
- empowerment: How do we call forth and empower people for the task of mission?
- resources: How do we resource mission?

This is an easy-to-read book with numerous stories of Shenk's experiences as a missionary and administrator. The 13 chapters, followed by questions for reflection and suggested background Scripture readings, could well be adapted for a quarter's study in Sunday school classes or for use in small groups. The book can help us gain a new understanding of God's mission to save the world, and our role in that mission as we face the 21st century.

Resources

- **Life Worth Living: Issues in Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide** is a brief study guide prepared by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's Council on Faith and Life. To order in Canada call toll-free 1-800-665-1954; or call (204) 888-6781; 10 copies for $7.50 Cdn.
- **It's Just Peacemaking** is a leader's manual for a four-hour workshop for high-school youth. Games, exercises, videos, Bible study and discussion look at conflict at home and in the world. Available from New Call to Peacemaking, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1958; $5 U.S. postpaid.
- **Coals of Fire** by Elizabeth Hershberger Bauman (Herald Press, 1994, $4.95 U.S./$7.10 Cdn.) contains 17 true stories about returning love for hate, good for evil; for grades 4 to 7.

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Editorial

As often as you do this

When we celebrate Communion we take part in a mystery. It is an act that cannot be fully explained but one that carries deep significance for Christians. We need to examine our practices around this event and see whether or not we are giving it less importance than we should.

When we come to the Lord's Table we are obeying Christ's command to "do this in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:24, 25). The Greek word used here ("anamnesis") means more than simply remembering; it carries the idea of reenactment. When Jews celebrate Passover they say, "When you (Lord God) brought *us* out of Egypt." Thus they reenact what happened thousands of years ago, placing themselves in the story of the Lord delivering the Israelites from their oppressors in Egypt.

> **Let us come often to the Lord's Table with hearts of thanksgiving, with the desire to give ourselves to the Lord and experience God's grace in a new way.**

In a similar way we identify with Jesus when we celebrate the Lord's Supper. We are the body of Christ, and we take part in the body of Christ when we eat the bread and drink from the cup. Again, this is a mystery that must be experienced rather than merely talked about to be understood at all.

Marlene Kropf (see the article on page 3) has noted that more and more Mennonite churches are looking at their practice of the Lord's Supper and desiring to celebrate it more often than the typical two or four times per year. Many congregations are celebrating Communion six or eight times per year. Some, like my own, do so each month.

I wish we could come to the Lord's Table every Sunday, as do the majority of Christians around the world. The early church (see Acts 2:46) seemed to practice some form of the Lord's Supper every day. And the practice quickly developed of celebrating Jesus' resurrection every Lord's Day (Sunday).

Since the early church and centuries of tradition encourage a regular and frequent practice of the Eucharist, why do so many Mennonite churches practice it so infrequently? Some, I suppose, believe this is in accordance with the early Anabaptists, who opposed what they believed was the empty practice of the Catholic church. However, according to John Rempel, author of *The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism*, the Reformation (including Anabaptists) tried to make the Eucharist more frequent, since the Catholic church was only practicing it twice a year.

Other people may feel that celebrating the Lord's Supper too often makes it less meaningful. However, the testimony of those at the meeting I attended in Elkhart, Ind. (see page 3), was unanimous in saying that, if anything, frequency makes it even more meaningful. As Daniel Schipani has said, "We don't say sermons lose their meaning if we have them every week."

Debate: How we celebrate Communion and who is invited will need discernment in each congregation. It's a discussion that can lead to much debate. But we need to address it. The group meeting in Elkhart did not come to a consensus on every aspect of the Lord's Supper, but people there did agree on two things: (1) the Eucharist should be celebrated more often than it is now in Mennonite churches, and (2) various themes can be addressed in its practice; we should not feel limited to the theme of Jesus' death.

Can we move beyond tendencies toward literalism (or reductionism), i.e., seeing Communion as simply a mental exercise in which we eat bread and drink juice? Can we begin to open ourselves to the rich symbolism and significance of Communion, to seeing it as a mysterious event in which Jesus Christ is present among us in a special way?

Let us try it. Let us come often to the Lord's Table with hearts of thanksgiving, with the desire to give ourselves to the Lord and experience God's grace in a new way. Let us come as one body of Christ to eat and drink in remembrance of Jesus, who gave himself for us. *Gordon Houser*

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For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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THE CHURCH IN CHINA

- The 'post-denominational' church in China (see page 3)
- Teaching as mission in China (see page 8)
- 'Shensheng, holy, shensheng' (see page 10)

Prologue

In recent years our understanding of mission has changed. We once believed North America and Europe to be the centers of Christian thought. Today over half of the world's Christians live in the so-called Two-thirds World. We are beginning to see as much potential to learn from our Christian brothers and sisters in other lands as to teach them.

In this issue, J. Lorne Peachey shares with us some of the struggles of the church in China. Some issues will not resonate with ours, for instance the difficulty of sorting the roles of church and state in a communist nation.

Other struggles, such as a shortage of leadership (in China one minister to over 6,000 parishioners) and the difficulties of relations between church bodies, may sound too familiar.

Hear from North Americans in China their complaints and thanksgivings from teaching English in China (pages 8-9). In a nation where mission work is frowned upon, they model faith in small but significant ways.

In the news read about the final recommendation of the Integration Exploration Committee, recommending the integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church (pages 14-15).

The integration proposal, if approved by the denominational boards, will be voted on at Wichita '95 this July. What should the outcome be? Let us know your view. *lp*

Next issue: The search for hope in the Middle East

Cover: Photo by J. Lorne Peachey

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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THE 'POST-DENOMINATIONAL' CHURCH IN CHINA

J. Lorne Peachey

The church in China is complex as it seeks to be an authentic Christian church in an uncertain setting.

Nancy Lee sits by her desk, twirling a pencil. A Mennonite teaching with China Educational Exchange, she has just answered your 50th question about China and its churches following a Sunday morning visit to a large downtown congregation in Shenyang, Liaoning province.

"You know," Nancy says, a slight frown on her face. "People come to China for a week, go home and write a book. They come for a month and write an article. They're here a year, go home and say nothing."

It's an apt warning. You've just had a heart-warming experience sitting shoulder-to-shoulder with 2,000 Chinese during a two-hour church service. The awe on their faces, the conviction with which they sing, the hunger for the gospel—all these you'll never forget.

Two weeks more in China, and you discover that the picture of Christians and the Chinese church is as complex and as complicated as China itself.

The church you just attended is a member of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM). To your Western mind, that "patriotic" should have told you that here indeed was a different way to do church.

TSPM had its beginnings back in 1950, when the Communist government expelled all foreign missionaries from China. Perhaps in a fervor of patriotism—or was it a way to survive?—Chinese Christians got together and formed the Three-Self church: self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating. Never again, they said, would the Chinese Christian church be run by foreigners.

What they said or what they called themselves didn't matter for years. The government took all church buildings and used them for storage, meetings or education. To identify oneself as a Christian meant exile, if not death. But changes came in the early 1980s with a new open-door policy and a constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. Churches began to get their buildings back. Remnants of former Protestant denominations got together and organized themselves: a China Christian Council (CCC) to take care of the

Up to two-thirds of the new believers coming into the church—both registered and unregistered—do so because of experiences of physical or mental healing, either in their own lives or in the lives of someone they know.

life and witness of the church; Amity Foundation for social service and relief work; Amity Press to print Bibles.

And the church began to grow. Bao Jiayuan, TSPM general secretary, says there are 8 to 10 million Protestants in China today; others say it could be as high as 50 million. Though that's still only 1 to 2 percent of the population, CCC estimates that three new believer groups start up every two days.

The 'other' church: Not nearly all Chinese Christians belong to the CCC's 8,000 churches, however. There are at least 20,000 other worship groups, by some estimates. The Chinese call these "meeting points"; some Western observers call them "underground churches." ("Why 'underground'?" asks one CCC leader. "They are all meeting publicly.") These meeting points are mostly small and located in rural areas.

Unlike the CCC churches, many of these meeting points do not register with the state. They have a strong mistrust of the government. Chinese Christians have seen the Communist government make too many changes in the past 50 years; the next one may go against them again.

Meeting-point Christians often also disagree theologically with the CCC churches. And then there's the whole matter of trust. Some meeting-point leaders were imprisoned during the Cultural Revolution, turned in to the state, they say, by leaders still in power in the Three-Self or the CCC.

"I've tried to do some forgiveness and reconciliation work," Gao Ying, one of the pastors of the largest Three-Self church in Beijing, tells our group of North American visitors. "But forgiveness doesn't seem possible when people can't really talk with each other about what happened to them."

New regulations: Perhaps the best example of the difference between these two groups of Chinese Christians comes in how they respond to new government regulations on religion published this year. The regulations ask churches to register their places of meeting and the names of their leaders (but not of their members) with local government officials.

Three-Self response has been to welcome the regulations. Leaders see them putting onto paper the freedom the government has promised. They believe these regulations will help curb persecution and abuses by local cadres—who, without directives from the government in Beijing, sometimes do pretty much what they please with Christians.

Indeed, Three-Self leaders helped draft the regulations. They insisted, for example, that churches do not have to join Three-Self (or the CCC) in order to register. Says the CCC's head bishop, T. K. King, "My feeling is that registration done according to the regulations is acceptable to the Christian conscience and that refusal to register does not glorify God and is not helpful to the church."

That's not the way many meeting-point Christians see it. For them the new regulations are a government crackdown, one that will limit their activity.

This view is especially fueled by Chinese Christians living in Hong Kong, people who fled there during the Communist takeover. One of these writes that the 1994 regulations "further restricted, in concrete terms, missionary activities in China and the places where religious activities should take place." This also appears to be the view of many North American and European church groups hoping to renew mission work in China.

Coping with the West: Talk of a rift between Christians in China is perhaps more Western than it is Chinese. *China Talk*, a publication of the United Methodist Church, says, "Chinese Christians could hardly but notice that in the U.S. there is … a polarization of 'mainline' and 'evangelical' churches [that goes] against the three-self principle of the China Christian Council."

Western influence and intervention does the Chinese church more harm than good, according to Wee-Seng Kua, a native of Singapore who is currently deputy general manager of Amity Press. One reason the Catholic Church is not prospering in China, according to Wee-Seng, is because of outside influences from Rome. Meanwhile, Protestants have built their own organizations and speak rather proudly of themselves as a "post-denominational church."

How does that work? Take the case of former Mennonite churches begun through North American mission work. Many of these have apparently aligned themselves with Three-Self and the CCC.

In at least one case, a former Mennonite group has asked North American Mennonites for help in rebuilding. When asked how Western Mennonites should respond, Pastor Bao says, "If people say they are Mennonite, perhaps it's because they have good memories of earlier associations. We do not think they want to establish a Mennonite church.

"Please understand our situation," Bao goes on. "We are in a special context, a special situation. We believe post-denominationalism is a gift from God for us for this time."

Bao says the CCC tries to respect the beliefs and practices of Christians associated with smaller denominations in the past. An example is the Saturday services conducted in many large, urban churches for former Seventh-day Adventist believers.

Healing the gap: Signs indicate the gap between the registered and the unregistered Chinese Christians may be shrinking. Ironically, a past symbol of the differences between the two may now be bringing them together. That

One estimate has no more than 1,200 ministers for 8 to 10 million Christians (that's 6,666 parishioners per pastor at best).

2.2 MILLION BIBLES IN ONE YEAR

At the end of 1994, 11 million Bibles had been printed and distributed in China since 1981. This makes the Bible the second most widely published book in China—after *The Selected Works of Mao Zedong*.

Most Bibles have been printed by Amity Press in Nanjing. Amity is a joint venture of the China Christian Council (CCC) and an international consortium, United Bible Societies. UBS has donated $6 million (U.S.) in printing equipment as well as the paper needed every year; Amity supplies the employees.

In 1994, Amity printed 2.2 million Bibles. "That's not nearly enough," says deputy manager Wee-Seng Kua. "One of my frustrations is seeing all the need, doing what we can, and still falling short of what is needed."

Amity has plans to purchase another web offset press and double its capacity next year. Will the government give permission to print up to 5 million Bibles?

"If we have faith," says Gu Ren Fa, a vice president of Amity. "If you would have told us two or three years ago that we would print 2.2 million Bibles this year, we would have said, 'Impossible.' But here we are."

The Bible being printed is a 1919 translation known as the "union Bible." CCC leaders are concerned, however, that it does not communicate well with young people; they want to do a new translation.

But they are running into resistance. "Some people complain if we change a single Chinese word," says Bao Jiayuan, an Amity leader. "They believe what we now have is the way God wrote it." *J. Lorne Peachey*

J. Lorne Peachey

Amity Press in Nanjing, China

Experienced pastors are in their 70s, 80s or 90s. Newer ones are in their 30s or 40s. Missing is a whole generation of 50- and 60-year-olds, leaders lost to the church during the desperate years of the Cultural Revolution.

THE 'POST-DENOMINATIONAL' CHURCH IN CHINA

symbol is the Bible.

CCC has been publishing Bibles since 1982. Amity Press printed 2.2 million Bibles in 1994; it also celebrated its 8 millionth since its beginning.

But, say the unregistered churches, many of whom have been recipients of Bible "smuggling" activities, this is not nearly enough. Besides, Amity Press must receive permission from the government for the number of Bibles it prints.

Amity officials admit they can't meet the demand; printings are usually sold out within a day and a half. They have plans for an

'TO CHANGE PEOPLE'S MINDS IS NOT EASY.'

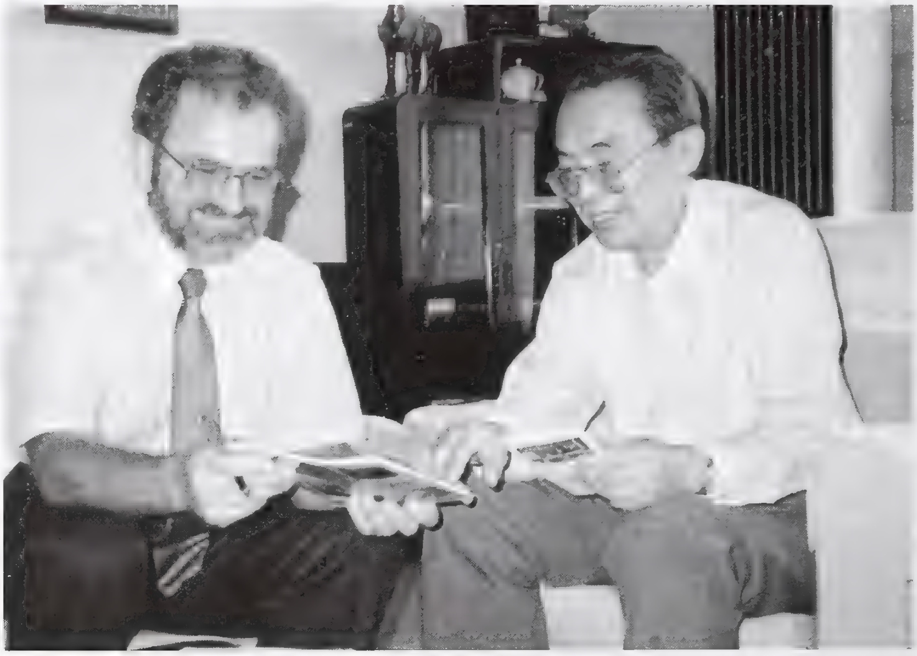
It's a nondescript entrance to an ordinary building in downtown Shanghai, China. Get to the fourth floor, however, and you'll find some of the most sophisticated computer equipment in this country.

This is the home of *Tian Feng* ("Heavenly Wind"), the monthly 48-page magazine of China Christian Council. Begun in 1945, *Tian Feng* has been published continuously except for the years of the Cultural Revolution.

Editor Shen Cheng-en says *Tian Feng*'s circulation was 40,000 when it resumed publication in 1980. Today it has 105,000 subscribers. Shen hopes for 120,000 by the end of next year.

The most popular part of the publication? A letters column inaugurated a year or so ago. Columns for young people, new believers and layworkers also have strong reader appeal.

Shen says the most frustrating part of his job is sifting through all the manuscripts he receives. "I don't like to reject anyone," he says.


Ann Martin

Editor Shen Cheng-en with J. Lorne Peachey

Shen writes few editorials. "I don't want to give readers the impression we're trying to tell them what to do," he says. Shen does say he won't hesitate to tackle tough issues—for example, how Christians should use money—even though there are readers who won't like it.

"Christianity in China is quite conservative," says editor Shen. "To change people's minds is not easy."
J. Lorne Peachey

* * *

additional press to double capacity and believe they will have no trouble getting government permission to do so.

Even so, Amity has begun distributing Bibles to meeting-point churches and not just to CCC churches. Amity leaders say unity around the Bible also got a boost recently when the Billy Graham Association began using Amity for its Bible distribution work. And just recently Brother Andrew of Bible-smuggling fame has begun to cooperate with Amity, according to Wee-Seng.

The gap between Chinese Christians may also be bridged by common experiences of healing. According to Pastor Gao, up to two-thirds of the new believers coming into the church —both registered and unregistered— do so because of experiences of physical or mental healing, either in their own lives or in the lives of someone they know.

Says Pastor Gao, "We think this is a miracle provided by God to help us be evangelical in China. We wonder if this might not be a special vision God has for us."

Another pastor says people in China don't ask questions these days about the nature and character of God. They want to know if God has any power. Might these experiences of healing be an answer?

The leadership gap: Unity is only one of the issues facing Chinese Christians. Wherever you go, you soon hear about another: leadership. One estimate has no more than 1,200 ministers for 8 to 10 million Christians (that's 6,666 parishioners per pastor at best).

What you're also soon aware of is what the Chinese call the "leadership gap." Experienced pastors are in their 70s, 80s or 90s. Newer ones are in their 30s or 40s. Missing is a whole generation of 50- and 60-year-olds, leaders lost to the church (literally and figuratively) during the desperate years of the Cultural Revolution.

Chinese Christians are working hard to fill the void. Many churches house seminaries—sometimes no larger than two or three rooms, with 20 to 40 students. Graduates tell of incredible workloads when they take on a church —baptisms, weddings, funerals, Christian education, counseling. One woman told our group that in three years she has worked 10 to 12 hours every day, seven days a week, with no days off and no vacation.

The workload is no exception, but the fact that this woman has a job at all may be. Another woman, Zhi Bin Lu, a pastor at Shenyang's largest church, says only one Chinese pastor in 10 is a woman; yet the seminary student population is more than 50 percent female. Many church leaders, she says, men in their 70s and 80s, are hesitant to ordain women.

Young pastors have the same complaint. Rural areas, especially, are hesitant to accept them. One rural province is reported to have ordained only one young pastor in 10 years, despite available candidates and the shortage of pastors in its churches.

"Christianity in China is quite conservative," says Shen Cheng-en, editor of CCC's monthly publication, *Tian Feng*. He reports that readers resisted his attempt to use Chinese art on the cover of his magazine. "They like Western art best," Shen says. Western tunes also predominated in the two church services our group attended, though we were told some rural churches are beginning to experiment with Scripture songs set to Chinese melodies.

And then there is the state—a continuing concern for Christians who must live under a Communist regime. To be a Christian in China often means a drastic choice. For example, you cannot be both a Communist Party member and a Christian.

At least not by regulation. But you hear the story of a Party member whose wife had an experience of healing. What did he do? Likely became a secret Christian.

There's also evidence some Christians may be secret Party members. Even while I was in China a story circulated of a church leader who turned in two pastors she didn't like to the state for "subversive activities," resulting in their imprisonment.

The picture of the Chinese church grows ever more complex the more one digs. But, says Wee-Seng from Singapore, "Those of us who live with more freedom must allow the Chinese to find their own way." And who are any of us to criticize how these 8 to 10 million Christians decide to do it?

Pastor Zhu puts it as kindly as she can in describing a trip she made to England. "I saw more churches than people," she said. "If only we could borrow some churches from you in the West!"

J. Lorne Peachey is the editor of Gospel Herald, *weekly publication of the Mennonite Church. In October 1994 he spent two weeks in China, during which he worshiped with two Chinese congregations, visited two others and talked with several leaders of China Christian Council. This is a Meetinghouse article.*

China Educational Exchange reaches many Chinese by teaching English at universities in China.

TEACHING
AS MISSION IN CHINA

J. Lorne Peachey

This year 22 North Americans are realizing their dream by teaching at universities in China in the name of the Mennonite church. Why?

"It's the people," says Avonne Trainor, Winnipeg, teacher at Sichuan Normal University in Chengdu. "I came to a place where the people are incredibly beautiful."

Lila Brenneman, Wellman, Iowa, also in Chengdu, says, "I love living here. I know what I do has an effect on my students."

For Todd Friesen, Harrisonburg, Va., at Beijing University of Science and Technology, "the exciting part is relating to the Chinese church. It's a challenge for me spiritually."

Avonne, Lila and Todd are three teachers serving with China Educational Exchange (CEE). In many ways they represent the culmination of decades of interest by Mennonites in this mysterious land of the East.

Mennonites first went to China in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. First they were on their own—individuals like Ella Funk and Loyal Bartel, who heard a call from God. Later their work came under mission boards of various Mennonite groups.

In 1951, China's Communist government closed the doors and forced foreign missionaries out. For 30 years, nothing. Then the door cracked open, and Goshen (Ind.) College sent its first Study Service Term students to Chengdu, Sichuan, in 1980. Goshen's president, J. Lawrence Burkholder, used contacts he had made as a United Nations worker in China following World War II to set up this first new contact.

By this time China wanted English teachers. There was more to do than Goshen College could handle. So a group of mission and relief organizations formed a coalition in 1982, and CEE was born.

> ***"I don't know of any other way to be in touch with so many people whom you can help and who can help you."***
>
> **Myrrl Byler**

Its hub is five mission and service agencies: the Commission on Overseas Mission (a General Conference agency), Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Board of Missions (a Mennonite Church agency), Mennonite Brethren Missions and Service, and Eastern Mennonite Missions (Lancaster Conference/MC). Cooperating with CEE for exchanges are 10 North American Mennonite colleges as well as the North American Chinese Mennonite Council, the Mennonite Medical Association and Mennonite Health Services.

Since its formation, CEE has placed 160 teachers in China for two or more years. It has also made it possible for 60 Chinese educators to visit and study in Mennonite schools in the United States and Canada. All this on a budget of $180,000 (U.S.) a year—"an incredibly cheap program," according to Myrrl Byler, Harrisonburg, Va., CEE's North American coordinator.

Why teaching? "I don't know of any other way to be in touch with so many people whom you can help and who can help you," Myrrl says. "I don't think there's anything else we could do that would affect more people."

CEE tried other exchanges. One was in mental health, a pressing need in China following the Communist takeover and the Cultural Revolution. But it didn't work.

"The problem with taking experts to China is that they want to do there what worked at home," Myrrl says. "But in China things must be done at a much more basic level." Besides, what the Chinese are really interested in is learning English.

CEE teachers tend not to be experts. Many of them are fresh out of college with little teaching experience. With few materials and no predrafted lesson

J. Lorne Peachey

Transparent: *Todd Friesen (left) is China Educational Exchange's coordinator in China, working out of the Beijing University of Science and Technology. Here he talks with Fan Pu, director of the Christian Art Center in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, about the possibility of marketing Chinese arts and crafts through Self-Help Crafts of the World. The Christian Art Center is one part of the work of Amity Foundation, an organization sponsored by China Christian Council.*

plans, it's strictly teach-as-you-go.

That includes oral listening classes, composition, videos, writing and comprehension. CEE teachers also participate in "English corners," where Chinese students practice their language skills. And they report hours of visiting with their students.

Get a group of CEE teachers together, and the first thing they talk about is lack of time and materials. No chalk, no good paper, no textbooks. No time to grade all the papers.

Leaky pipes: The second is living conditions. Leaky pipes in the bathroom. Switches that don't work. Odors and mildew. Then the conversation goes to university students being interested in education only for money. And CEE teachers sometimes feel they are being befriended just so students can practice their English.

"A frequent occurrence when some foreigners get together in China is to spend a lot of time complaining," states a CEE document sent to new recruits even before they leave home. "While it's important to air one's feelings and frustrations, be aware when such meetings become too negative and cause more harm than good."

Ten minutes of complaining, and someone remembers that directive. The conversation soon turns to contacts with students.

"You know what one of my students told me today?" Avonne says. "She said, 'Do you know why we like you? Because you really love us. Most of the foreigners who come here just pretend to love us, but they really look down on us. You're different.'"

Students across China say similar things about their CEE teachers. A group gathered for tea in Todd Friesen and Dennette Alwine's Beijing apartment were effusive with their praise:

"Todd and Dennette are not only our teachers, they are also our friends," a student with the English name Maggie told me. Albert said, "So many foreign teachers come to China to travel first and teach second. Todd and Dennette are teachers first."

As they stay longer, CEEers find more and more opportunities to counsel with students. "I find I end up talking about my faith with students when they are depressed," says Mike Wiggs, Livingston, Calif., teacher at Sichuan Institute of Technology.

Faith: Comments like that soon have any gathering of CEE teachers in a heated discussion of if, when and how they should talk about their faith.

"We are a transparent organization," says Todd. "The Chinese know who we are and why we're here. They know we are Christians. We're Christians who abide by their country's laws on religion."

But exactly what those are and how they should be applied, CEE teachers can debate at length.

CEE advises its teachers not to establish structured Bible studies for Chinese students and friends. "Talk about your faith informally," says a CEE guideline. Perhaps that's just as well. One CEEer reported that at her university the rumor was out that the way to get to America was to join a Bible study group.

And what of the future? CEE's primary concern right now is personnel. Recruitment has slowed. The 1994 figure of 22 teachers is down from an all-time high of 30-plus in the late 1980s.

Why? Geography, apparently, has a lot to do with it. Todd and Dennette have spent five years in China. With questions of beginning a family on their minds, they think of their ties back in the United States. "If China were next door like Mexico," Todd says, "I'd see us staying here a long, long time. But China is halfway around the world."

There are also concerns about a career after China. "Two years of teaching English with CEE puts you out of the loop," Todd says. "Three years puts you into oblivion."

Balance that with the plea from You Ji Yu at Shenyang Teacher's College: "We need more teachers from CEE."

So CEE goes into its future with questions but committed to its unique role: placing English teachers in China as it brings Chinese educators to North American Mennonite schools.

Reflections on a visit to a worship service in China

'SHENSHENG, HOLY, SHENSHENG'

J. Lorne Peachey

You'd think attending church the world over would be familiar ground. We have, after all, in Paul's words, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5), revealed in one Bible.

I recognized much in my first visit to a church in mainland China last October. The hymn tunes were Western. From its rhythm I knew we were praying the Lord's Prayer. I even heard familiar names in the sermon on Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

What was unfamiliar were the people. Our group arrived late—late being five minutes before the 10 a.m. opening. Already the congregation of 2,000 had been seated for an hour, learning new hymns by "lining."

We were escorted to two front benches with engraved plaques: "Reserved for Foreign Guests." This was Chinese Thanksgiving Sunday, and we were honored guests.

For Thanksgiving the congregation had brought hundreds of apples to stack in front of the platform along with bananas, tangerines and liters of Coke. Only when our group was persuaded to sing and I was on the way to the platform did I see the tubs filled with live fish.

We sat like everyone else, shoulder to shoulder, not an empty space anywhere. The pianist led in a spirited opening hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy." Seldom have I experienced more goose bumps or been so moved as hearing 2,000 Chinese sing, "Shensheng, Shensheng, Shensheng."

I knew it cost these people to sing. The old man to my right, with his clear, modulated voice, had kept his faith through China's upheavals of the 1950s and the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s. I could only imagine what he had gone through to be here.

The young people there would likely never lead their work group, have the best jobs as teachers or be involved in local or regional government.

Many of these people had worked the previous six days, Sunday being the only time for family, shopping or taking care of one's needs. But these 2,000 had chosen to spend several hours in worship. And this was just the second of three services. An earlier one had also crammed in 2,000. We were told one later would have 1,500.

All three services were the same—the same hymns, the same Scriptures, the same sermon by the same pastor. "Otherwise people won't leave," one pastor said.

Sermons are at least an hour long. Pastors say people want them that long. Not everyone agrees. Several times during my two weeks in China I heard that the church will not attract more young people unless it does something about long sermons and other traditions. This includes almost a sole emphasis on personal piety and little attention to social needs.

Nor was everyone attentive during the two-hour service. In the second church I attended I heard a constant hum, some of it from neighbor helping neighbor follow in their Bibles, some from what seemed just plain talking. Yet none of that canceled the hunger I saw on so many faces. People were there to hear God's word, to worship.

I'll never forget the radiance on the face of the tenor in the front row of the choir. While I couldn't understand what he was singing, his face showed he meant every word.

Dongguan Christian Church in Shenyang, Liaoning province, is just one of many crowded every Sunday across China. The number grows.

You almost have to witness such hunger for the gospel to believe it. When you do, you realize we in the rest of the world can learn a great deal from the church in China.

In the words of Atlee Beechy, a pioneer in Mennonite contacts with China the past 15 years, "Chinese Christians have much to teach North Americans about faithfulness and suffering, courage, patience, love of the Bible and hope."

That hope will bring us together some day, and we'll sing, "Shensheng, Holy, Shensheng."

Ann Martin

Goose bumps: *Part of the choir at the Dongguan Christian Church in Shenyang, Liaoning province, preparing to sing for a special Chinese Thanksgiving service on Oct. 9, 1994. The choir's presentation followed the regular morning worship service that day. It included both songs—all recognizable Western tunes—and narration.*

Letters

GAMBLING DOESN'T WORK

I really appreciated your recent issue on gambling (Nov. 22, 1994). That is an area that is seldom addressed by Christian publications but is important and timely. In Oregon, our new governor is pushing to use lottery funds for school funding—a big mistake, in my opinion. I find that ironic. For 10 years I sent my children to a Catholic grade school in my neighborhood. I reluctantly worked Bingo one night a month to help support the school budget and because it was expected of all parents.

In the early years the school took in a large sum of money annually from the Bingo games, and it was difficult to challenge that success. But as our state introduced the lottery and video poker, and as other organizations began Bingo games, the customers went elsewhere and profits fell. Finally the profits fell so low that the school board decided to drop Bingo. There had been much resistance to doing this and a lot of fear about where additional funds would come from to round out the budget with Bingo's loss.

But the funds came—through new fund-raisers, through increases in tuition, through gifts. The school learned that there were better ways to support the budget than through Bingo.

Now if only the state could see what we had already discovered: It's a mistake to fund schools with the proceeds from gambling. I question whether any program should be funded that way. *Robert Hoffman, Portland, Ore.*

POLITICAL BIAS SHOWS

Re the editorial "Hatred Is a Heresy" (Jan. 24 issue), I respectfully suggest that your political bias is showing.

You wrote that some political leaders want to "punish the poor and give tax breaks to the wealthy." I do not know of any politician of any party that wants to punish the poor. What some politicians want to do is reform the welfare system to make recipients responsible for their own behavior. If you drop out of school, if you do drugs, if you drink and become an alcoholic, if you are a single teenage mother, if you do not make an honest effort to find employment, you will probably be poor and will stay that way until you change your behavior.

You also wrote that people in California voted to take away medical and education services from immigrants. But you conveniently left out the key word, "illegal." Illegal immigrants are breaking the law. If you decided to live in another country, would you not get your visa and follow all the legal requirements to live in that country? Should not our illegal immigrants do the same? *Dick Weber, Lititz, Pa.*

GOD LOVES THE POOR

We cannot say yes to the "Contract with America" and its balanced budget amendment without saying no to God. Why?

Because God loves the poor, who bear the contract's burden; because God loves justice, and the contract promotes power; because God is peace, and the contract guarantees strife.

Much better for Americans to enter a "Contract with God" and a "Balancing the Equities Amendment."

God assures us if we only had the faith of a mustard seed we could say to our nuclear arsenal, Be gone, and it would go; to our obsessive fears, Off with you, and trust would be our companion; and to doubt, Away with you, and faith would sustain us.

Then we could move toward an equity system releasing the captives of a capital structure designed to consolidate wealth and power.

In such a system the rich would not be sent empty away, as Mary's Magnificat foretells. The poor would be lifted up, and God would be pleased with our yes to him and no to the contract. *Larry Lange, Devils Lake, N.D.*

HYPERBOLE

Re the Jan. 24 editorial, "Hatred Is a Heresy," I think that they [political leaders] want to *reduce benefits* given to the poor, give tax breaks for *capital gains* and take away *nonemergency* medical and educational services from *illegal* immigrants. Let's let Rush Limbaugh do the hyperbole. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

WE ARE ALL SINNERS

Jacob Elias makes an excellent and eloquent point in "The Gospel and Excuses" (Feb. 14 issue, page 11), and it's the same one my pastor made in a recent sermon. I hope more pastors across North America will choose to enlighten their congregations in this. *We are all sinners.*

By tradition we have decided that certain sins are worse than others, and those we ourselves have committed are, after all, only minor ones.

If we're intent on splitting the General Conference, let's do it over gossip. That way we'll all still be in the same group and there won't be a split after all. *Metta Lieb, Newton, Kan.*

PRAYER MATERIALS HELPFUL

We would like to express our appreciation for the *Praying with the Anabaptists* materials (see Nov. 8, 1994, issue).

The book of devotions *Praying with the Anabaptists: The Secret of Bearing Fruit* by Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall is inspirational and stimulating. The section of biographies of 16th-century Anabaptists is not only instructional but also illustrative of tremendous "fruit-bearing."

The tape of *Hymns for Meditation and Prayer* done by the Eastern Mennonite University Chamber Singers is excellent. We enjoy listening to it with the *Hymnal: A Worship Book* in hand. The creativity of presentation with a variety of styles is helpful. Listening to this tape has become a regular "preworship" ritual on Sunday mornings. *Claude and Mary Boyer, Pandora, Ohio*

Ideas your church can try

Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., on Jan. 1 brought out a devotional guide to be used during the church's centennial year. Produced by the congregation's evangelism committee, the guide includes 365 meditations—from the past as well as new writings by church members and former ministers.

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Isn't your life worth as much as your car?

Why you should have life insurance and how to get it

J.B. Miller

I grew up in a time when life insurance for Mennonites was a controversial subject. Most Mennonites in my home community didn't believe it was appropriate to buy it.

Fortunately for me, my parents lived until all their kids were grown, but I often wonder what would have happened to us if my father had died. He had no life insurance, and my mother had few marketable skills or financial assets she could have used.

I do remember a young mother with four or five children struggling to make ends meet because her husband had been killed, leaving them with no means of support. It seemed cruel for the father not to have taken better care of the people he supposedly loved.

In those days people said they didn't buy life insurance because they trusted in the Lord. Even as a child that didn't make any sense to me. Why did people buy auto insurance and any other insurance available to protect against unexpected loss of property, but one's life could not be insured?

Even though the idea of life insurance has lost most of its controversy, people still seem hesitant to purchase it. Some people think it's expensive. Or they do not like many life insurance salespeople who spew jargon that only confuses the customer. The different types of life insurance make it difficult for the untrained to understand.

In spite of this, life insurance should not be ignored. People increasingly see the need to purchase life insurance to be certain that financial matters are taken care of should one of the income earners in a household die. To leave children and/or a spouse with no means of support is a cruel and irresponsible act on anyone's part.

One of the first questions usually asked is, How much life insurance do I need? There is no rule of thumb that works in all cases. The best answer to that question can be answered only by a financial planning professional. Choose a professional you trust; someone who has been recommended to you by another satisfied customer. Life insurance should not be purchased through a television advertisement or over the phone. It should be purchased as part of a financial plan, not as an independent act.

Types and amounts: A good financial planner generally has some professional designation, such as Certified Financial Planner (CFP), Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU) or Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC). A good financial planner will ask you many questions. It is important that you answer these questions accurately and candidly. From this information, the financial planner will make a recommendation on the types and amounts of life insurance you need.

With the recommendations may come some confusion, because life insurance has a variety of options. More specifically life insurance can be broken down into two types: term and permanent.

Term insurance is the easiest to understand. It is for a specified period of time, such as one year or 20 years, or to a specified age, such as 62. The insurance expires at the end of the term. It can usually be renewed, but premiums will probably increase, and new medical history may be taken. If your health has deteriorated during the initial term, you may not have the ability to renew.

This type of insurance works much like insurance on your car. It covers a specified period, you pay the premiums at least annually, and the coverage ends at the end of the term. Many term policies can be converted to other forms of life insurance, so even term policies have some complexities.

The ability to convert to other policies is known as a conversion privilege. A conversion privilege is important since it allows the insured to exchange types of coverage without undergoing a physical examination or otherwise showing evidence of good health. Sometimes there may be a separate premium charged for the convertibility feature. Most term polices do not develop cash surrender values or have policy loan availability.

People who are in poor health often have difficulty purchasing life insurance, or they have "rate ups," a term used to describe additional premiums because of health considerations. Rate ups and coverage denials should be easy to understand. No one expects to be able to buy car insurance to repair a wrecked car after the accident has already occurred. Your body is as important as your automobile. Since we have a tendency to develop health problems over time, people should buy life insurance when they are younger, thus locking in lower premiums and guaranteeing that they will not be denied coverage later in life.

Although premiums vary from company to company, some typical premiums for a 20-year term policy in the amount of $100,000 for a person in good health are as follows:

Age	Sex	Annual Premium
25	Female	$160
25	Male	$175
35	Female	$190
35	Male	$220
45	Female	$330
45	Male	$420
55	Female	$640
55	Male	$985
65	Female	$1,410
65	Male	$2,360

Whether you are a wage earner or you are supported by a wage earner whose loss of income would have a detrimental effect on your lifestyle, you need to review your insurance needs carefully. Taking care of people who depend on you is an important aspect of Christian stewardship.

Next month's column will deal with more complex forms of life insurance: whole life, universal life, variable life and universal variable life.

News

Conference aims to create green theology

Camp Lake, Wis.—When the Mennonite Environmental Task Force lost its funding in 1993, people thought it would fade away. But the group's conviction led them, largely on their own time and money, to plan a three-day creation summit, held here Feb. 24-26, recapturing support from various agencies and convening over 130 people committed to caring for the environment.

The gathering aimed to articulate an Anabaptist theology of environmentalism. But while steps in that direction were taken, the end goal remained elusive. Speakers found seeming contradictions in Scripture and tradition.

Harvard professor Ted Hiebert in the opening address described a contradiction in the opening chapters of Genesis between verses 1:1—2:4a, which present humanity in a position of authority over nature, and verses 2:4b—3:24, which present humanity as servants of nature. And he said Paul's interpretation of the creation accounts in Genesis creates further problems by downplaying the emphasis on the created world and focusing solely on humanity's relationship to God. He recommended the reading which places humanity in the service of nature, but did not reconcile that reading with the other two.

In a later address, Walter Klaassen, professor emeritus at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., admitted that after scouring the Anabaptist tradition for any trace of environmental concern, he came up empty-handed. Klaassen concluded that Mennonites had not gone into agriculture out of a love for the land, but merely to survive. Despite a commitment to nonviolence, Mennonites, he said, have done no thinking about nonviolence toward the Earth and "are by no means in the Christian front ranks of creation care." Klaassen called Christians to see the fullness of God's kingdom that encompasses all of creation: "Whenever we see a stone, tree, animal or person we see the speech of God."

Dorothy Jean Weaver in her New Testament study came closest to building a consistent, Scripture-based environmental theology. Weaver, professor at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., emphasized Christ's role in redeeming all of creation. She cited references to God as Creator of creation and of Christ's role in both creation and redemption. She described incarnation as both a downward motion in which God becomes flesh and an upward motion in which creation is filled with and

Larry Penner

For God so loved the worm: *Lee Hertzler carved this worm for his grandson to teach him about God's love for creation. The worm is reading John 3:16, paraphrased in "Good News for Modern Worms." Hertzler, of Hesston, Kan., shared the sculpture during storytelling at the summit.*

Inside the news

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MCC takes new role in Rwanda and Burundi / p. 17

Kansas couple hears suffering of Rwandans / p. 18

Church takes closure steps in abuse case / p. 19

Ken Nafziger encouraged musicians to try new things at the Church Music Seminar hosted Jan. 19-22 by Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Concord College in Winnipeg. "What happens when we do unconventional things is we learn how to do traditional things better ... because we learn what sound means," said Nafziger, professor of music at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. Choral pieces commissioned for the seminar included "Psalm 67," by Leonard Enns of Waterloo, Ont., and "Song of Songs," by Carol Dyck, Edmonton, Alta.

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Trinity Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill., has said it will withdraw from the Illinois Conference of the Mennonite Church if no action is taken at the conference's April sessions concerning Oak Park (Ill.) Mennonite Church, which grants membership to homosexual people. In a letter printed in the conference's newsletter, *The Missionary Guide*, Trinity pastor David Troyer, speaking on behalf of his church, says, "We want [Oak Park's] restoration and not their dismissal. We hope and pray that Oak Park will repent and be restored. ... However, if no action is taken in April, we as a church would have to take decisive action ourselves. ... If no action is taken, we will abstain from membership in the Illinois Conference until this matter is resolved."

In Brazil a Portuguese-speaking convention of Mennonites and a German-speaking convention of Mennonites will merge March 31. The Portuguese-speaking Brazilian Convention of Mennonite Brethren Churches grew out of North American Mennonite Brethren mission work. It has 18 churches and approximately 2,300 members. The German-speaking Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Brazil was begun about 60 years ago by German immigrants. It currently has 19 congregations. The two groups will form a new body, the Brazilian Convention of Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Churches. Increasingly German-speaking churches in Brazil are offering Portuguese services, usually on Sunday evenings. Such groups tend to grow rapidly, sometimes surpassing the relatively stable host congregation.

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"The Global Change Game" came to Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Jan. 18. On a giant floor map of the world, each of 65 people involved represented 100 million people in the nations they were assigned to. They had to use creativity and problem-solving skills to provide necessities such as food, health care and employment. The game, run by a group of University of Manitoba students, requires participants to balance their economy and environment while establishing relations with other regions. Participants realized that correcting a national problem is not simple. Funds and resources must be found, which often means begging the First World nations for aid. The game came to a halt when one nation decided to use nuclear arms. The game has been in operation for three years. For more information about the game, contact Rob Altemeyer in Winnipeg at Box 42 University Center, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2.

bears witness to the divine.

Responding to Weaver's talk, Gordon Zerbe of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, raised the issue of contradictory passages in the New Testament. He pointed to many passages that characterize the world, the flesh, and earthliness as oppositions to things divine. Zerbe admitted he felt the temptation to "spin doctor" Scripture. He said that while some Mennonite fellowships may be comfortable with contradictions in Scripture, most demand a unified reading. "There is ambiguity and ambivalence in the New Testament" toward the environment, he said, but "world-neglecting modality is not the dominant modality."

Living theology: Amish farmer and writer David Kline of Holmes County, Ohio, brought a less academic approach to his address. Describing the Amish closeness to the land, he suggested modern Mennonites' inability to find an environmental theology may stem from their alienation from the land. He asked: "Are we merely residing on the land instead of living with it?" He stated a need that theology arise from lifestyle: "Am I wrong in believing that if one's livelihood comes from out of the earth, from creation, on a sensible scale, where we are part of the unfolding of the seasons, experience the blessings of drought-ending rains, and see God's hand in all creation, a theology for living should be as natural as the rainbow following a summer storm?"

In a closing address, farmer-theologian Richard Cartwright Austin of Appalachian Ministries Educational Resource Center, Berea, Ky., called listeners to recognize that "all things were made through Christ and redeemed in Christ. Jesus is the savior of *all* life." He asked that we "tame the civilized and let the wild be wild."

Outside the mass assemblies, small group discussions brought together farmers, educators, mission workers, students and others. Many, like cardiologist and llama farmer Art Kennel, Rochester, Minn., had unique experiences to share. Kennel told about his work setting up a program to aid llama farmers in Bolivia.

They also shared struggles. One rural minister's wife shared how she and her husband used the word "environmental" sparingly because the agribusiness world her church members work in resists talk of conservation or sustainable practice.

Some voiced their frustration with their fellow Mennonites. "I'm less concerned about being heard by our government than how our own people are living," said Anette Eisenbeis of Freeman, S.D. "If we aren't a witness … what kind of voice will we have?" Many called for a return to more-with-less living.

The Inter-Collegiate Peace Fellowship held its annual meeting at the conference. The fellowship brings together students from Mennonite schools in the United States and Canada. Reporting to the conference, students said their discussion often centered on power and systems of power. They questioned whether to work for change within existing power structures, or to try to build new ones.

If the conference failed to define an Anabaptist environmental theology, it succeeded in building support for the task. In a show of support for the task force, delegates at the last session asked permission to take an offering for the group. After a scramble for containers, delegates began passing their own hats. *Larry Penner*

Committee calls for integration

Chicago—After six years of study, listening to opinions in scores of congregations and area conferences, and meeting a total of 11 times, the Integration Exploration Committee (IEC) believes merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church "is in the best long-term interests of both."

In its final recommendation, drafted here at the committee's last meeting Feb. 11-13, the IEC urges GCs and MCs "to move toward the integration of our two denominations" (see box for complete recommendation).

The IEC's recommendation now goes to the GC and MC general boards for ratification. If both do so, the recommendation will come to the delegates of each group for action at a conjoint meeting scheduled for July in Wichita, Kan.

The recommendation also calls for the church to establish an "Integration Committee" to oversee how the two denominations merge their structures and activities. It asks the general boards to decide by 1997 exactly when

The IEC's recommendation

In response to the scriptural call to Christian unity, the growing cooperation and regional integration between the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, and the affirmation of a common confession of faith and a statement of vision for our two bodies:

A. We make a commitment to move toward the integration of our two denominations.

B. We ask the two general boards (in consultation with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada):

- to schedule regular meetings for joint discussion of cooperative ministries,
- to facilitate integration of denominational programs as feasible,
- to propose by 1997 a time frame for integration of the two boards and the denominational assemblies,
- to appoint a new integration committee to guide and monitor the ongoing process of integration by boards, commissions, associate groups, and area and district conferences.

C. We agree to respect the interest and pace at which our conferences and their constituent congregations and associate groups choose to integrate.

the merger would take place.

The wedding date: The *when* of integration became a major item during the committee's deliberations. In a previous draft of the recommendation, a target date of the year 2003 had been removed by the Mennonite Church's General Board.

"A lot of anxiety focused on the date," MC moderator Donella Clemens explained. "When the date was removed, there was more relaxation about integration."

Several members said, however, that not including a date would either slow the merger process or derail it completely.

"My head says we ought to have a date there to move us along administratively," said Ruth Naylor, GC representative from Bluffton, Ohio. "But my gut says to leave off the date.

"I would like to feel the MCs were ready for integration before we do it," she continued. "It's not enough to be accepted. We GCs want to be embraced."

Richard Early, GC representative on the IEC who now pastors an MC church in Broadway, Va., compared the anxiety about the date with "jitters right up to the wedding day. We must remember that our focus should be on the marriage, not on the wedding," Early said.

How to word the proposal: Committee members spent considerable time creating their final recommendation, hoping what they wrote would become "a rallying point" for the church for integration.

Said committee co-chair Nelson Scheifele of Happy Valley, Labrador, "What we need is language that conveys to our churches our sense of 'let's go.'"

During their three days of coming to what turned out to be unanimous agreement on the recommendation, committee members were aware not everyone would agree with their conclusions. Particularly perplexing to some was a meeting being called in early April by merger opponents to discuss other options to merger, such as more cooperation or a federation of the two denominations.

IEC members wondered why this move by a group of MCs was coming so late in their process. But they agreed continued discussion is welcomed, and several said they would attend this "alternative" gathering.

God's leading: Committee members also agreed they have heard more positive than negative comments about integration in their six years. In a background section to its final recommendation, the IEC says that it has "a clear sense that God is leading the Mennonite and the General Conference Mennonite Church to become one Mennonite Church."

The IEC also agreed to pass on several suggestions to a new integration committee. One is that the name of the new denomination be the Mennonite Church. A second is that *The Mennonite* be the name of its main periodical. *J. Lorne Peachey*

Celeste Marie Martin, Mennonite Central Committee children's orientation coordinator, died Feb. 9 at age 33. She had been in a coma since Jan. 27, when she suffered a heart attack. "MCC children around the world have lost a friend," says Melody Rupley, MCC personnel development administrator. Since 1991 Martin had organized activities for some 240 children, mostly junior-high age and younger, while their parents attended 10-day orientations prior to entering MCC service. "Celeste provided a safe place for young MCCers to share their fears and dreams," says Rupley. "Celeste's love and concern for each child was evident. Lots of young MCCers will miss her."

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Shelly

Linda Shelly received the 1995 Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) Young Alumni Award Feb. 20, when she spoke to Bethel students about her experiences in Latin America. She has served as coordinator for the Central America Regional Peace Portfolio and has served with Mennonite Central Committee in numerous capacities, currently as area secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean.

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A conference on male identity will be held April 7-8 at Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg. The conference, "Men: In Search of a Gentler Spirit," is intended for "men who want to base their understanding of themselves in the real world and on the Bible but are uncomfortable with the gender stereotypes found in the mainstream Christan men's movement," says planner Dave Pankratz. For more information contact Pankratz at (204) 261-6381.

Eastern Mennonite Missions staff prayed and fasted during February for the Islamic people and nations throughout the world. The Islamic month of Ramadan ran from Jan. 31 through March 1. During that time over one billion Muslims fasted from sunrise to sunset as an act of faith.

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The Mennonite Nurses Association has released a "Resolution Caring for Persons with HIV." The statement says in part "that Mennonite Nurses Association members respond to persons and their significant others who are afflicted with HIV+ with love, compassion, justice and nondiscriminatory behavior as modeled by Jesus Christ ... [and that] members support efforts to develop special caring services for persons with HIV and their significant others in churches and congregations." The statement was finalized by the executive committee November 1994.

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Mennonite Central Committee may well be the most significant Mennonite institution, Ron Mathies told an audience at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., Feb. 5. As the 15th Benjamin Eby lecturer, Mathies said MCC has no formal courses, collects no tuition and grants no degrees. MCC's campus, nonetheless, is worldwide, its learning a continuing education for adults at all stages of life's journey. Mathies said over the years MCC has moved through stages. He says MCC began in a "teaching" stance of optimism about its ability to help other peoples and has progressed through a "learning" mode as workers began to see their first responsibility as listening and learning from the host culture. He now sees MCC in a stage of mutuality in learning and teaching, with a reciprocity of both local and global partners.

MCEC holds dialogue on homosexuality

Waterloo, Ont. (*Mennonite Reporter*)—More than 150 people attended a Jan. 28 workshop here on "Homosexuality and Christian Faith."

The event was planned by the Theological Concerns Council of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC).

In an opening Bible study, Tom Yoder Neufeld examined Acts 15, Matthew 18 and Romans 14 and 15—biblical texts about the church coming to agreement amid great conflict.

Personal stories from four panel members followed. One man, who asked not to be identified, said his journey of healing has meant accepting himself as a homosexual and realizing he is created and loved by God.

But, he said, "when I came out of the closet, my family went into theirs." He appealed for the church's understanding and for pluralism—"as in the ordination of women."

A second panelist, Rob Goetze of London, Ont., said his path of healing involved submitting his sexual brokenness to God "rather than celebrating it."

Goetze attributed his homosexuality as a teenager to an absent father and abuse by males. He said he is no longer sexually attracted to men.

Goetze is now married and works for New Direction for Life Ministries, a counseling outreach for "people who want freedom from homosexuality."

Panel members Martha and Paul Snyder of Breslau, Ont., told their story of having to accept their gay son after years of hoping he would change.

"Our pain now is not over having a gay son but over the church's attitudes," they said. "At first we felt sorry for gay people, but now we see the face of God in them."

A second panel after lunch included representatives from three congregations that have dealt with the issue of homosexuality.

One church, which asked not to be named in print, described the study process that led to adoption of a statement on sexual orientation. The statement welcomes all who seek to follow Jesus, as spelled out in the congregation's longer covenant.

Sexuality is a gift: The statement's final paragraph says, "Our understanding as Christians is that sexuality is a gift from God and that the expression of our sexual relationships should be built on enduring mutuality, integrity, respect, love and commitment. Within this understanding, we welcome persons of any sexual orientation to full participation and membership upon affirmation of the covenant."

A representative of a second congregation, Mississauga (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship, described the church's experience in having a lesbian couple covenant with the group.

"We affirmed our membership statement," Anna Wiens of the congregation said. "The wording was inclusive. ... We didn't change the statement, but we grew in our understanding."

"Our understanding as Christians is that sexuality is a gift from God."

One church's statement

She added that not everyone in the congregation had an easy time accepting the couple, who had earlier established a "covenanted relationship" at Metropolitan Community Church in Toronto.

The final afternoon panelist was a pastor who has brought together families affected in some way by homosexuality. He said he didn't want to be named in print, because homosexuality had not yet become a public issue in his congregation, since no gay or lesbian people were asking for membership.

The pastor said he wants dialogue. But he is "not so sure" he can recognize homosexuality as "an equally valid option."

All participants were asked to preface their remarks by acknowledging their failings and their reliance on God's grace. The same was required of those who asked questions in the time available after the two panels.

"I want to be accepted as a whole person with body and spirit," said a woman who identified herself as a lesbian.

"It would be easier for the church if we would just live together and be celibate—or pretend to be," she continued. "I want to be monogamous and faithful."

"What did God have in mind for same-sex relationships?" a pastor asked. One panelist replied that she could not presume to speak for God.

Discrimination: Another pastor voiced frustration at what he called discrimination against leaders and congregations "who don't hold to the party line"—namely, the existing denominational statements that say homosexual practice is sin.

But another congregational leader warned against using "acts of failure to establish principles of Christian practice."

"When I was not honoring my body [in an earlier marriage], you celebrated with me," a woman replied. "Now that I'm honoring my body [in a lesbian relationship], many can't celebrate with me."

The day was billed as a time of dialogue and reflection. According to MCEC moderator Ron Sawatsky, the conference hopes to hold other events dealing with the issue. *Ron Rempel*

MCC shifts focus in Rwanda and Burundi

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—With the Feb. 6-9 departures of the second international Mennonite team to assist Rwandan refugees, Mennonite Central Committee is ending its direct Rwandan refugee support. MCC will now focus on developing reconciliation and healing initiatives among survivors of Rwanda's civil war.

MCC has also recently placed three workers in a Burundi village. Many believe violence between Burundi's Hutus and Tutsis is approaching the same level as occurred in neighboring Rwanda.

Since July 1994, MCC has worked through Zairian church structures to support 5,000 to 6,000 Rwandan refugees with food, shelter and clothing. Larger agencies with funds and the mandate for ongoing relief will now assume this work.

MCC workers in the region will take on a bridge-building role, says Arli Klassen of MCC's Africa department. As foreigners they are able to travel between the conflicting groups, something not possible for individual Hutus and Tutsis due to the tensions nurtured by the recent killings.

MCC workers will attempt to develop links between Hutu and Tutsi Christian leaders. They also hope to identify individuals "who on their own are carrying out small acts of faithfulness to try to build bridges" in order to link them to a larger network of peacemakers, says Klassen.

As well, Harold Otto, MCC coordinator for Rwanda and Burundi, is collecting stories of people—some of whom were killed and others who survived—who refused to participate

A time to build: *Hutu and Tutsi youth in Ruyigi, Burundi, work together to rebuild an elderly Tutsi couple's house that had been destroyed in ethnic violence. "We show love in action by making bricks and building houses," says Prosper Ndabishuriye, director of the Campus Crusade for Christ house-building project. Mennonite Central Committee has contributed $10,650 U.S./ $15,000 Cdn. to the project. Ndabishuriye estimates 300 houses will be repaired over the next year. The 50 young Hutu and Tutsi participants, divided into four or five teams, labor together in the mornings; after lunch they visit with local people, listening to their stories and talking about responses to violence and reconciliation.*

Dave Klassen (MCC)

The 39th annual Pennsylvania relief sale will be held March 31-April 1 at the Harrisburg (Pa.) Farm Show Building.

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The Bank of Montreal will offer Canada's estimated 500,000 local voluntary service organizations some bank services free of charge. Church groups, Girl Guide and Boy Scout troops, minor sports leagues and local branches of national nonprofit organizations will be eligible for the new community account. Fees for deposits, checks and withdrawals will be waived under the new plan. If all eligible nonprofit organizations take advantage of the plan, the bank says, they could collectively save $2 million a month.

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Rwandan Tutsi and Hutu pastors and leaders had an opportunity to face their stereotypes and hatred of each other when some 35 people attended a week-long gathering at a Christian retreat center near Mwanza, Tanzania. Hizkias Assefa, director of the Nairobi Peace Initiative and long-time Mennonite Central Committee friend, facilitated the December 1994 meeting. Survivors dealt with feelings of bitterness toward people who had been on the other side of Rwanda's brutal 1994 civil war that killed as many as 1 million people and forced several million to flee to neighboring countries, where they now live in refugee camps. The sharing led many to openly express grief, an essential step toward healing, comments Arli Klassen of MCC's Africa department. "Long-term peace won't come to the region without grieving, which is connected with healing and reconciling," says Klassen. "If people go ahead and rebuild their lives without healing, the cycle of violence will likely continue in the next generation." The Nairobi Peace Initiative is supported by Mennonite Central Committee.

Johan Heyns, moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa from 1986-90, was killed Nov. 5, 1994, by a single shot through the window of his home. Heyns led the Dutch Reformed Church as it moved from supporting apartheid to denouncing it as sin. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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The U.S. government has canceled its Doomsday Project after spending $8 billion on it over the last 11 years, reports *Ploughshares Monitor*. The project created underground bunkers, communications systems and two fleets of lead-lined transport trucks designed to circulate along the U.S. highway system and keep the government operating in case of nuclear war. The first truck, developed in 1984, was so heavy it sank through the pavement on its first test run; the second wedged itself under a highway overpass. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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Christian Peacemaker Teams has endorsed the campaign "1995 Disarmament Coalition," formed to educate around the need for disarmament in the 50th anniversary year of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. The campaign calls people to contact legislators and express concern about the cancellation of a Smithsonian Institution exhibit about the atomic bombing that ended World War II. On Jan. 30 the National Air and Space Museum scrapped its controversial exhibit of the bombing after sweeping changes downplaying the violence of the act were not enough to pacify critics, particularly the American Legion, which did not want the display to suggest the United States had acted irresponsibly in dropping the bomb. CPT plans to send groups to join protests outside the NASM beginning in late May. The coalition may be reached at (202) 635-0441.

in the killings. "The intent is to hold up people who lived out their beliefs, so their courage can inspire others," says Klassen.

Three MCC volunteers have recently left for six months in Burundi. They will live in the town of Kibimba, which has become a symbol of hate.

In October 1993, following a coup, Hutus all over Burundi attacked Tutsis in revenge for the army action. People from the surrounding countryside came to the Kibimba school—located on the former mission station of the Evangelical Friends (Quakers)—picked out all the Tutsi students and teachers, marched them to a gas station 2 kilometers/1.2 miles away, doused them in fuel and burned them to death.

The incident set off an orgy of revenge killings; up to 150,000 Burundians died in following days.

MCC and the Evangelical Friends Church of Burundi have proposed a "peace presence in Burundi."

"The huge task of reconciliation will only be accomplished one hill at a time. ... It will in the end be accomplished by plodding, face-to-face encounters by peacemakers committed to living in the villages, whose very presence means accountability and whose consistent message is justice, mercy and reconciliation," write Pam and Ron Ferguson, MCC Uganda country co-representatives.

"This proposal invites Christians from other countries to participate in changing one hill, Kibimba, from a symbol of hate to a symbol of reconciliation. Breaking down the walls dividing Kibimba would send a message of hope that Burundi can still avoid degenerating into a Rwandan cataclysm," says Otto. *Emily Will*

Kansas couple hears suffering of Rwandans

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—When John and Reinhild Janzen heard stories of suffering from Rwandans during a recent visit to Africa, they were struck by the absence of tears.

"No one refused to speak about their personal experiences, but there seemed to be little grief-letting," said John Janzen, who along with Reinhild recently returned from a three-month MCC term in Rwanda and Burundi.

Dave Klassen (MCC)

A Rwandan refugee in Bukavu, Zaire

A Rwandan woman was asked why this was so. "The horrors are too enormous to cry over," she replied.

Nevertheless, given the right circumstances, people showed a desire to speak about "the event," as the slaughter and subsequent exodus of people has come to be known to Rwandans. "People were even willing to elaborate on details if we asked them to," John said.

The Janzens went to listen to victims' stories, hoping to learn how to encourage an African way of healing the deep emotional wounds experienced by the refugees.

During their stay the Janzens heard stories of forgiveness. There was Ndayambaje Ibrahim, who was taken to the edge of the village refuse pit and forced to kneel as his executioner raised his machete to cut off his head. Before the blow fell, Ibrahim jumped into the pit. The executioner and others threw rocks at him to kill him but he stayed alive in the pit, surrounded by dead bodies, for about 10 days.

Finally he was rescued and taken to a nearby hospital. His enemies heard of this and came for him, but he was spirited away by his "godfather" and hidden in a house. In the weeks that followed the original attackers were forced to flee. At one point Ibrahim met one of the men who had wanted to kill him.

"Do you know me?" he asked the man.

"Yes."

"Do you admit that you hurt me?"

"Yes," he admitted, then asked to be pardoned.

Ibrahim, a Muslim, said, "If you admit that you did it, I'll forgive you. If God forgives me, I should forgive others."

John Janzen is an anthropologist at the University of Kansas and Reinhild Janzen teaches art at Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) and the University of Kansas. *Rick Fast*

Closure sought in processing of abuse

Newton, Kan.—Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church held a service of closure Feb. 5 to take a further step of healing after its minister, Peter Ediger, was dismissed under allegations of sexual misconduct.

Western District Conference's (WDC) conference minister Marvin Zehr brought the message at the Sunday morning service. A candle was lit and the congregation was invited to write any thoughts on pieces of paper to be brought forward and burned as a sign of letting go.

Ediger's ministerial credentials were revoked in May 1993 after having been suspended since May 1987. Since 1993 a committee from the church and conference officials have worked with Ediger to bring healing to the situation. The healing process included establishing an Arvada Abuse Recovery Fund, to which Ediger made regular payments, to facilitate healing for those abused.

At the Feb. 5 worship Zehr also shared with the congregation a statement from the WDC ministerial committee, drafted Jan. 24.

The WDC statement to the church affirmed the importance of placing the responsibility for Ediger's actions on Ediger rather than on the congregation. It also acknowledged that with the withdrawal of credentials the conference no longer has jurisdiction over Ediger's behavior.

The statement also expressed three points directed at Ediger:

- that he is not to function as an ordained minister and is to honor the revocation of his credentials,
- that the conference acknowledges that any future donations he makes to the abuse recovery fund are voluntary,
- that his records will remain on file in the Western District conference minister's office and that WDC will continue to respond with accurate information to appropriate people concerning the actions of the ministerial committee regarding his credentials.

The statement also assures the Arvada church that conference staff will continue to respond to needs and issues should they resurface at a later date. *Larry Penner*

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European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5 - 21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10 - 26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes
England/Scotland	August 9 - 24	Wilmer Martin & Mary Rittenhouse Schwartrzentruber
Mexico	November 15 - 30	Cal Redekop

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Carolyn Ann Aish of New Zealand has entered the Guinness Book of Records for writing the longest hymn. Her "Sing God's Song" has 3,017 lines, takes 2 1/2 hours to read and took her seven years to write. The longest previous hymn was a 2,966-line hymn written in Latin by Bernard of Cluny in the 12th century. (*Christian Week*)

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Help for U.S. military personnel is now just a phone call away. On Sept. 22, 1994, a consortium of peace groups began a free hotline to advise members of the armed services of their rights. The program is specifically designed to assist those who wish to resist being deployed, are being abused or discriminated against, are absent without leave or want to be discharged. Callers may speak with counselors from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. The number is (800) FYI-95GI. Sponsors include the American Friends Service Committee, the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors, the Resource Center for Nonviolence and the War Resisters League. (*Friends Journal*)

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Former Supreme Court Justice William H. Brennan Jr. on Nov. 10, 1994, launched an effort to end capital punishment. The Justice William H. Brennan Project, created by the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, will support education and organization opposed to the death penalty in the United States. As a member of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1956-1990, Justice Brennan consistently ruled in favor of freedom of expression and the rights of criminal defendants. For more information contact the project at NCADP, 918 F St. NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20004. (*Friends Journal*)

Record

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AMBS—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.
COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

The Northdale Mennonite Fellowship and Valley Gardens Community Church merged Jan. 8. The new name and address is Jubilee Mennonite Church, 365 Edelweiss Crescent, Winnipeg, MB R2G 2B6. The interim pastor is John Epp. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Among the world's countries, the United States ranks first in military power and first in arms sales, reports the *Newton Area Peace Center Newsletter*. However, the United States ranks 21st in infant survival rate, 27th in education and 61st in immunization rates. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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Scholars affiliated with The American Interfaith Institute want to remove anti-Judaism from Christian theology and to modify the New Testament to reflect that truth, writes Howard Clark Kee in *Interchange*. According to the group, current translations do not take into account historical and social factors that can skew interpretations of the Scriptures' original intent. Kee writes that under Roman rule a small number of Jews exploited their fellow Jews for the benefit of themselves and their conquerors. These, Kee says, were the only Jews that Jesus was against. However, "in the New Testament, references about the arrest and crucifixion refer simply to 'the Jews,' implying that all Jews were the enemies of Jesus." Kee goes on to say, "For too long the concept of Jews killing Jesus has been so formulated in the Christian tradition that responsibility has rested not only on Jews in the age of Jesus but on Jewish people of all ages. ... It is this deicide charge that has had an unholy influence; that has led to an evil unwarranted reaction."

DEATHS

Alvin Friesen, 66, of Outlook, Sask., died Feb. 11. Friesen served as a physician with COM from 1957-1976 at the Mennonite Christian Hospital, Hualien, Taiwan.

WORKERS

Andrew Kreider, Elkhart, Ind., has been named director of admissions for AMBS beginning July 1.

H. Wayne Pipkin has resigned his position of professor of Anabaptist and 16th-century studies at AMBS. He is serving as American Protestant Chaplain in Moscow, Russia.

Wilbert R. Shenk will resign as associate professor of missions and director of the Mission Training Center at AMBS to begin teaching at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.

Ken and **Mabel Snyder**, Salem (Ore.) Church, are beginning 12- to 18-month MCC interim terms in Laos. Ken will be working as country representative and Mabel in a support assignment. They previously served with MCC in Jamaica.

K. Snyder

M. Snyder

Suderman

Erwin Strempler, editor of *Der Bote*, will retire after 1995. The German-language newspaper is published by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Margaret Suderman, Bethel Bergthaler Church, Winkler, Man., is beginning a four-month MCC term in Ephrata, Pa., where she will work as a returns clerk in the consignment warehouse of Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Ben and **Patti Wiebe**, Hamilton, Ont., have begun a three-month term with COM and Mennonite Board of Missions teaching at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India.

Pai Chou Yang, Kitchener, Ont., Hmong New Hope Alliance Church, began a five-year MCC term in April 1994 in New Hamburg, Ont., where she works as a picker and packer at Self-Help Crafts of the World Canada warehouse.

Bluffton College seeks **campus ministries intern** to assist campus minister for 1995-96 academic year. Responsibilities include: adviser to student religious life groups, assist planning and leading of chapels and other on-campus worship experiences, lead on-campus Bible studies, spiritual counseling, one-on-one discipling, team leader of hall chaplain program, coordinate and supervise ministry teams and help create and stimulate other new initiatives. Preference given college graduate and/or seminary student seeking practical experience in campus setting.

Contact **Randy Keeler, Box 806, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817; (419) 359-3219.**

Men : In Search of a Gentler Spirit

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MEN: In Search of a Gentler Spirit

Exploring biblical and historical perspectives on male identity, anger and violence.

Goshen College seeks faculty for a half-time, one-year position in **art appreciation and history** for the 1995-96 academic year.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Screening and applications will begin March 1 and continue until the position is filled.

Applicants should send letter of application, three letters of recommendation, one sheet of slides or art history research information, complete undergraduate and graduate transcripts, and SASE to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.** If you have further questions, call **John Nyce at (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Eastern Mennonite University has the following positions open:

- **Faculty position in business:** One-year, temporary position (3/4- to full-time) beginning fall 1995. MBA/CPA and teaching experience required. Responsible to teach primarily upper-level accounting courses, and some general business courses.

- **Faculty position in nursing:** One-year, temporary position beginning fall 1995. Doctorate preferred, MSN required. Education and experience related to community health, medical-surgical nursing, and/or family nursing necessary.

Application deadline: **May 1.** Minorities are urged to apply. Send letter of application and résumé to **Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for a **graphic designer** (Akron, Pa.). This two- to three-year position is available June 20 on a voluntary service or salaried basis. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree with fine arts and graphic design emphasis and practical graphic design experience with computer and print production.

Interested people contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151.** Applications are due **March 31.**

MCC
BIKE SKYLINE
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1995

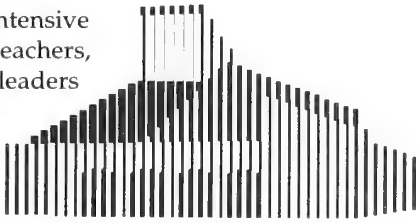
August 6 - 10, 1995

Organized by MCC East Coast

Cycle Virginia's Skyline Drive and Shenandoah Valley on this first-ever Bike Skyline-Virginia tour for the benefit of MCC.

For information contact:
MCC East Coast, Fern Kuhns, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501
(717) 859-3889

Summer at AMBS



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June 5-16

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Joseph J. Kotva, guest instructor
June 5-16

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Willard Swartley, AMBS
June 19-30

Worship: Ceremony, Symbol and Celebration
Marlene Kropf, Mary Oyer, June Alliman Yoder, AMBS
June 19-30

Conflict, Communication and Conciliation
John Paul Lederach, guest instructor
June 23-30

Creation and Spiritual Renewal
Perry Yoder, AMBS
(Includes eight-day canoe trip in boundary waters wilderness area)
June 26-July 8

Jesus the Teacher
Daniel Schipani, AMBS
July 10-21

History of Christian Spirituality
Peter Erb, guest instructor
July 10-21

Reading a Greek Letter: I John
(Four-week beginning Greek course)
Jacob Elias, AMBS
August 1-25

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Reviews

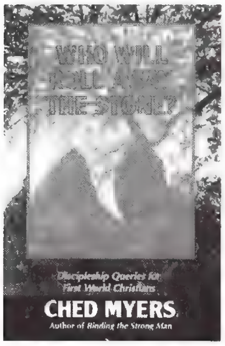
BOOKS

THE FIRST WORLD IN DENIAL

Who Will Roll Away the Stone? *by Ched Myers (Orbis, 1994, 495 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

In this sequel to the author's *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Orbis, 1988), Myers applies the insights of that volume to First World Christians.


WHO WILL ROLL AWAY THE STONE?
Discipleship Queries for First World Christians
CHED MYERS
Author of Binding the Strong Man

He uses the image of Peter in the palace courtyard while Jesus is being interrogated by the political rulers of his time. Peter denied knowing Jesus, then had to "see again" after Jesus rose from the grave and called his disciples to follow him anew.

Like Peter, says Myers, we First World Christians are in a palace courtyard, what he calls the "locus imperii." Our great temptation is to deny the reality of the kingdom of God and live under the illusion of the Empire's way of life rather than following Jesus' way of discipleship.

Myers develops an entire vocabulary to communicate Mark's message to our 20th-century context. It is complex and takes a while to absorb. This book is not a fast read!

He calls us to understand our context, face our denial and restore our vision in order to see the basic structures of sin. Then we must work at "deconstruction," which is his term for conversion. From there we move toward "reconstruction," or redemption, creating new structures that reflect "the Great Economy" (God's kingdom).

Throughout the book Myers fuses biblical analysis and current events, focusing on the Los Angeles riots of 1992, the Gulf War of 1991 and the Columbus Quincentenary. He offers a critique of the white, middle-class peace movement, calling it too symbolic, too exclusive and too captive to the dominant culture.

While he provides some stimulating insights into Mark's Gospel and makes persuasive arguments for its application to our contemporary situation, Myers may also be criticized for reading his own agenda into a first-century document. At times his hermeneutics stretch one's credulity.

Nevertheless, he helps us look at Mark's story in a new way, one that can both challenge and excite us about following Jesus' way of discipleship.

A further criticism of this book is that it will not reach the general reader. It is addressed much more to the academic community, and some may brand it elitist. But anyone who struggles with this book and its conclusions will be confronted by the gospel in a new way.

THE REAL PAUL

Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle *by Neil Elliott (Orbis Books, 1994, 308 pp.)*

Reviewed by Jacob W. Elias, Elkhart, Ind.

In this provocative study of God's justice and Paul's politics, Elliott addresses the question, "What do we do with Paul?"

As several opening case studies illustrate, Paul's letters have often been cited when the powerful need a rationale for dominating the poor. Peacemakers confronting domestic violence, war and economic injustice, therefore, often conclude that Paul takes sides against the poor, women and other victims.

In *Liberating Paul* Elliott responds, both by liberating Paul from some of his interpreters and by unveiling a liberating Paul.

Paul himself has been enslaved, Elliott argues. Even within the canon, especially Ephesians and the pastoral epistles (which Elliott regards as non-Pauline), Paul has been betrayed. The church has subverted Paul's message concerning the scandal of the cross into a socially conservative ideology supporting the status quo.

In seeking the real Paul, Elliott discovers a revolutionary steeped in apocalyptic theology. The cross demonstrates that God has annulled the wisdom of this present age and its rulers. By raising the crucified Jesus from the dead, God shows that despite the continuing evil in the world, divine justice will prevail in the end. The faithful community can therefore live and act in hope of the ultimate triumph of God.

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Elliott too easily dismisses certain letters and texts as non-Pauline. However, his reading of Paul offers a timely corrective for those whose piety permits an easy tolerance of abuse, war and oppression.

In an autobiographical comment, Elliott testifies concerning his own personal commitment to divine justice as taught and modeled by Paul. He describes himself as an Anglican lay Franciscan living in a community identifying with the poor and the suffering.

Mennonites seeking to follow Jesus also need to learn anew what it means to align themselves with God's justice in a hurting world.

IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN

The Comforting Whirlwind: God, Job and the Scale of Creation *by Bill McKibben (Eerdmans, 1987, 95 pages)*

Reviewed by Faith Hershberger Penner, Ames, Iowa

McKibben has the ability to take the ordinary and make it exceptional. Like a kaleidoscope, he has shaken basic information into a new pattern. Through both strong logic and lyrical language, McKibben shows the parallels between what God said to Job out of the whirlwind and what that same message says to us today.

McKibben challenges our cultural paradigms. I grinned at his example of the weather forecasters for whom sunny weather is always "good" weather. I like thunderstorms! One of the main paradigms that McKibben contests is that growth is good. He paints a grim picture, based on a wealth of scientific information, that clearly sets out how growth is destroying our planet.

As Christians, most of us would agree with McKibben when he writes that material possessions do not bring happiness. The twist on his argument, however, is his theory that our society is also starting to acknowledge the truth of this fact. He maintains that, in spite of technological advances, our lives have not changed much in the past 30 years. With no more ease or luxury to aspire to, people are realizing that they have to find a new path to happiness.

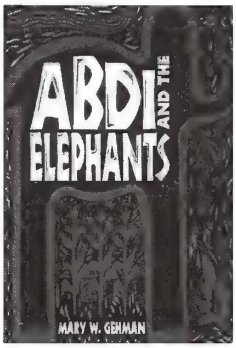
McKibben eloquently describes the beauty of creation, demonstrating how we are only a part of that creation, not the center of it, as our culture would have us believe. He portrays God unveiling a wild and wonderful creation to Job. God shows Job the little vultures drinking blood and the silly ostrich, who surpasses the horse in its speed. McKibben's message is that we are to be humbled by God's creation and to exult in it.

The only criticism I have of the book is perhaps not McKibben's fault. In spite of the book's title, I did not find it comfortable reading. McKibben leaves the reader with no obvious places to begin to rectify the vast environmental destruction he portrays. He endorses recycling, for example, but acknowledges that it is a Band-Aid, not a solution. He sees private automobiles as the worst environmental sin, but bicycling or taking a bus is not practical for many people without major changes in their lives or a vastly improved transportation system.

The solutions he presents are ones that need to be undertaken on a global scale. In particular, he challenges those of us in the "developed" world to set a standard of living that is sustainable for the whole world. Even so, that doesn't give any one of us the excuse to shrug our shoulders and say we can't begin to make more responsible individual choices. One doesn't need to be an environmentalist or a theologian to be challenged and intrigued by this book.

Resources

- **Woman's Work** by Anne Baxter and Nora O. Lozano-Díaz (Herald Press, 1994, $7.95 U.S./$11.35 Cdn.) is a devotional book with study questions, notes and resources.
- **Making Church Language Culturally Inclusive** is a booklet to help churches create a racially and culturally inclusive environment. Contact Mennonite Media Ministries, (800) 999-3534.
- **Peace—Just Live It! A Challenge to Youth for the 21st Century** by Christine Neufeld (Faith & Life Press, 1995, $18.95 U.S. /$24.75 Cdn.) is a 10-session Bible study curriculum for high school youth that encourages peacemaking as a way of life.
- **When It Hurts to Live: Devotions for Difficult Times** by Kathleen Kern (Faith & Life Press, 1994, $11.95 U.S./ $15.75 Cdn.) applies God's message of healing and hope to those suffering from depression.
- **Resolving Disputes in Christian Groups** by Marlin E. Thomas (Windflower Communications, 1994, $12.99 U.S./$15.99 Cdn.) shares theoretical and practical knowledge drawn from the author's experiences as mediator and counselor.



- **Abdi and the Elephants** by Mary W. Gehman (Herald Press, 1995, $5.95 U.S./ $8.50 Cdn.), for ages 11 to 13, tells of life in Somalia.
- **Anxious for Armageddon** by Donald E. Wagner (Herald Press, 1995, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.) tells of Wagner's involvement with the Middle East and calls Christians to understand the pain of Middle East Jews and Palestinians.
- **The Church's Peace Witness**, edited by Marlin E. Miller and Barbara Nelson Gingerich (Eerdmans, 1995, $14.99 U.S.), contains seven essays asking the question, Should Christians be involved in making war?
- **1995 Celebrations from Church Women United** includes "The Earth Is a House for All People," written by Christian women in Ghana, for World Day of Prayer, March 3; "All Have a Place at the Table," a worship sevice for May Fellowship Day, May 5, and "Preserving the Fruits of God's Labor," a worship service for World Community Day, Nov. 3.
- **So Who Says I Have to Act My Age?** by Kevin Johnson (Bethany House Publishers, 1994, $6.99 U.S.) is a collection of early teen devotionals.
- **Like Dew Your Youth: Growing Up with Your Teenager** by Eugene H. Peterson (Eerdmans, 1994, $7.99 U.S.) presents adolescence as a time for parents to enjoy a deeper relationship with their children. It includes study questions.

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Editorial

It is time to reveal ourselves

The opening chapters of the Bible give humanity an awkward task. David Hiebert, professor of Old Testament at Harvard Divinity School, cites a conflicting message in the first chapters of Genesis. Hiebert shared his reading at a Creation Summit last month (see page 13).

In Genesis 1:1—2:4a, the account of the seven days of creation, Hiebert sees Scripture mandating a priestly role for humanity as overseers of creation. Humansin this passage are created in God's image to "fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over … every living thing that moves upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28).

Then, in Genesis 2:4b—3:24, which contains the account of Eden, Hiebert sees humanity being placed in dependency on the Earth and in subservience to it. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15). When Adam and Eve are cast out of the garden, the land is placed under a curse under which they also suffer.

While we hesitate to live up to our calling, the Earth continues to decay.

Here is our predicament. Never before in history have we so fully realized this peculiar symbiosis of lordship over and dependence on God's creation. Today we hold it in our power to destroy the Earth. And we live in the fear that our own pollution and waste will choke our planet, leaving us helpless to save ourselves.

Apocalypse now: More than one presenter at Creation Summit saw the parallels between our situation and the end of creation described in the Bible's last pages. "In environmental terms the prophetic words of John the Revelator require astonishingly little 'interpretation' to be understood in our context," says Dorothy June Weaver, professor at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. "Their relevance to our world is hard to escape."

She stresses the causes of Revelation's environmental catastrophe: "As John views it, human sinfulness and failure to repent are the leading causes behind the environmental cataclysm."

And this is where we as Christians must begin to respond to the suffering Earth. For too long we have selfishly and pridefully kept Christ's message of salvation to ourselves. We have forgotten or denied that God's reconciling love extends to *all* of creation. Our arrogance has led to an easy consumerism that treats the planet as disposable.

Scripture declares God's role in creating and sustaining creation: "From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work" (Psalm 104:13). The psalmist sings, "O Lord, how manifold are your works! … When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground" (104:24, 30).

In Jesus, God entered the world to redeem it. What if we took Jesus' words at face value when he commissioned us in Mark 16: 15, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation"? What does it mean to proclaim salvation to a contaminated river, eroded field or strip-mined hill?

We must learn to love God's creation as God does. It will mean a profound nonconformity to society. It will mean treating the Earth with respect. It will mean slowing our steps and opening our eyes and ears to the world around us, a world waiting with eager longing to be free from its bondage to decay (Romans 8:21).

As dependents on the land, we are dependent on God's grace for the continuance of life. As stewards of the land, we as God's children are called to love, protect and nurture the land into the perfection God intended for it. While we hesitate to live up to our calling, the Earth continues to decay. As Paul writes in Romans 8:19, "The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God." Let's reveal ourselves. *Larry Penner*

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

110: 06
MARCH 28, 1995

- Hearing with a third ear (see page 5)
- Christians in the Holy Land (see page 6)

Muhanna Arab waters an olive tree, hoping to hold on to his family's land.

The search for hope in the Holy Land

Prologue

On my first morning in Jerusalem, Feb. 24, I looked out my hotel window and marveled at being in the city where Jesus walked, preached and later was killed. During the next week, I and four Canadian journalists interviewed around 50 people and took more than 1,000 photos.

What you see on pages 3-11 is really only a glimpse of what I saw and heard. I had read quite a bit about the Middle East, but being there added so much more to my perspective.

I was warned about people who visit the Holy Land for a week and think they are experts, while people who have lived there for years offer no answers to the problems that plague that area. I must offer the disclaimer that what I have written comes from listening to many people who often do not agree with each other. I have tried to represent their views as faithfully as I can.

Before I left I envisioned the cover title of this issue being "Peacemaking in the Middle East," but I changed it to "The Search for Hope in the Holy Land." There is peace being made there, but the overall impression I received from the people I talked with was a pessimistic one. That's one reason the editorial calls for prayer. I don't know what else will do more to bring peace to the Holy Land.

Peace be with you as well, wherever you live. *gh*

Next issue: Celebrate Easter as a family

Cover: Photo by Gordon Houser

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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Gordon Houser

Hope in a dry and weary land

The search for hope in the Holy Land is a long and difficult struggle.

Editor Gordon Houser joined four other journalists in the West Bank to learn about the situation there. Mennonite Central Committee sponsored the trip and hosted the group Feb. 23-March 1. Gordon wrote the articles and took the photos on pages 3-11.

Muhanna Arab waters a small olive tree he has planted as a sign of hope that someday he will recover the land that was his and will be allowed to live freely and in peace. That tree, sprouting in the hard, dry earth of Palestine, is a symbol of the fragile yet persistent hope that Palestinians cling to against formidable odds.

Muhanna lives in an old school bus on land his father cared for and passed on to him. Muhanna, who has never married, is in his 50s and works as a tailor when he can find work. But he does not dare to leave his residence to seek out customers, because the Israeli Jews who are building a settlement around him may destroy what little he has left. They tried it once before.

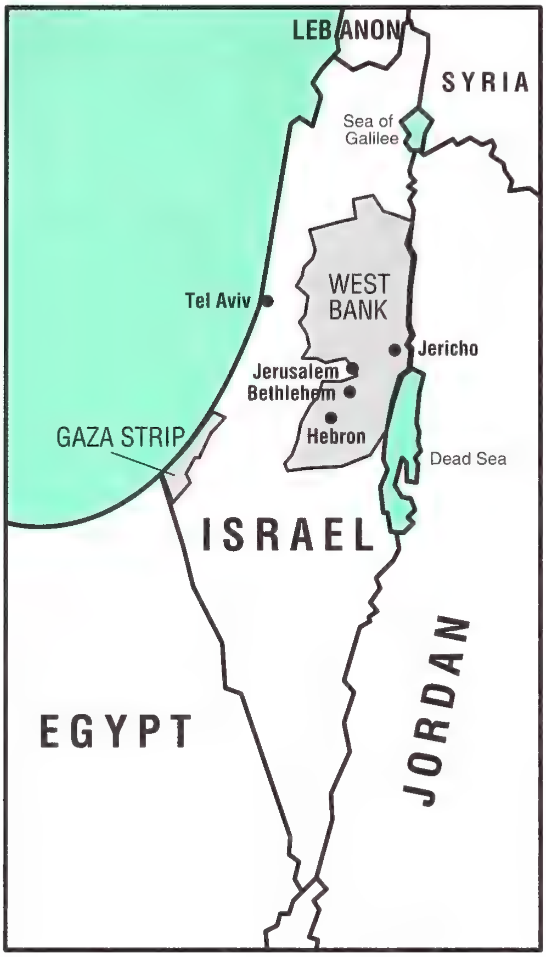
On Aug. 6, 1984, these "settlers" bulldozed Muhanna's house. A boy young enough to be immune from legal action drove the bulldozer. Muhanna has a scrapbook with photos of the boy on the bulldozer. He also has a letter from Teddy Kollek, then mayor of Jerusalem, that acknowledges Muhanna was illegally wronged. As compensation, Kollek gave Muhanna the school bus that is now his home. But he is still trying to get back the 50 dunams (12.5 acres) of land that the settlers took, and the mature trees he once had (he can show you photos of them) are gone, uprooted by that bulldozer.

His case for getting his land back has been passed around various courts for more than 10 years, with no decision made. The Israeli government has tried to buy his remaining land, but he won't sell. "You have to be stubborn to keep the Jews from taking your land," he says. The government does not levy any property tax against Muhanna because that would acknowledge that he owns the land. While his residence is within the expanding borders of greater Jerusalem, Muhanna, like many Palestinians in the West Bank, cannot obtain a permit to go into Jerusalem, where he might find customers for his trade.

Former Mennonite Central Committee worker Kathy Bergen befriended Muhanna about five years ago and helped him acquire a sewing machine. But he depends on customers coming to him for fittings. Friends also bring him gas he needs for heat. Despite all the adversity he faces, Muhanna maintains a positive outlook and remains determined to keep his land. His prospects, however, do not look good.

Closure: While many people around the world felt hopeful with the signing of the peace accords last fall, the situation has not improved for most Palestinians. With each incident of violence against Israelis, such as the suicide bombing in January that killed 21 Israelis in Tel Aviv, the government increases its security measures. Closure of the occupied territories, preventing most Palestinians from entering Israel from the West Bank or Gaza, began March 30, 1993, and has lessened or increased off and on since then.

Israeli soldiers roam the streets of East Jerusalem (the Arab section of the city) and set up checkpoints around the city and throughout the West Bank. Palestinians who want to come into the city for work or trade must pass through a checkpoint with the proper papers or else sneak in. If caught, they face a fine of up to 450 shekels ($150 U.S.), a



huge amount for people in dire economic straits.

Such security measures are a daily reminder to Palestinians that the land they see as their homeland for generations is occupied by a powerful military force. Jamal Hilal, 34, lives in Beit Sahour, 30 minutes from Jerusalem, yet he has not seen Jerusalem for eight years because he does not have a permit. Because he was once arrested he had to carry a green card for three years. This meant he was "a dangerous person," he said, and "could be arrested or beaten at will."

Ghassan Andoni, 39, who with Jamal directs the Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement Between People, teaches physics at Bir Zeit University. Two days before we spoke with him, he said, he had a pass to go to Jerusalem to work. But at the checkpoint the soldiers had dogs search him and his companions. He said to one of the soldiers, "Does this remind you of something?"

Laila Abusada, whose husband is the priest at the Greek Catholic church in Bethlehem, told us about a woman who wanted to take her 5-year-old boy to the hospital in Jerusalem. The soldiers, she said, would only let the boy go through the checkpoint. Laila's brother, who was out of the country during the Six-Day War in 1967, has not been allowed in since.

Searched by dogs: *Ghassan Andoni*

According to Ghassan, Israel's control over the West Bank and Gaza "was based on a strategy of enhancing the dependency of the occupied territories on Israel's economy through an elaborate system of political and juridical control." For example, Palestinians cannot export the fruit and vegetables they grow, but Israel sells fruit and vegetables to the West Bank. And Israel controls tourism, its largest industry, with 1.5 million tourists per year. Bethlehem, a Palestinian town, does not have control over the

A glossary

Closure: Beginning March 30, 1993, Israel closed off the borders between occupied territory and the state of Israel to most Palestinians. The strictness and extent of the closure has varied since then and intensified after the January suicide bombing in Tel Aviv.

Fatah: The political party of Yassir Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Hamas: A political party of Palestinians that is growing in popularity as the peace accords between Israel and the PLO fail to bring change to the economic hardship Palestinians face.

Intifada: A movement of resistance by Palestinians that began at the end of 1987. It united people as never before, avoided the use of firearms and brought attention to the occupation.

Palestinians: Arabs who consider Palestine their homeland. About 1.2 million live in the West Bank; another million live in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. About 1.5 million live in refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. An estimated 3 million live in other countries around the world.

Settlements: Communities of Israeli Jews that exist throughout Israel and are growing in number in the West Bank. They represent a critical hindrance to possible Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank.

Church of the Holy Nativity.

Water: Perhaps the most important resource in this land, however, is water. Jad Isa'c, director of the Applied Research Institute in Beit Sahour, is an expert in water usage in Palestine. He claims that

- Israel controls 85 percent of the water;
- the water in Gaza is mostly brackish, unsafe to use because of salt content;
- Israel is the only country in the region that takes water from others;
- 5 percent of the land in the West Bank is irrigated, compared with 50 percent of the land in Israel.

How does this affect daily life? In Bethlehem, for example, people can only get water every 10 days. They store water in tanks on top of their houses, but this only lasts six days. Last summer they went two months without fresh water.

In the peace talks with Israel, Jad was head of the negotiating team on the environment, but those talks, he said, are now dead. He was positive about the peace agreement last fall, but the situation has deteriorated since, he said. Now there are 5,500 people under arrest, whereas during the talks the number was 2,000.

Few people we talked with were optimistic about peace with Israel. One person who expressed some optimism was Lucy Nusseibeh, director of the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence. Her staff has been in close contact with the ongoing talks between Israelis and Palestinians. The sides have worked out guidelines for elections in the West Bank; however, she said, "you cannot talk about having a democratic election without total [withdrawal of the soldiers]."

There will be pressure to have elections by the end of the year, well before Israeli elections in 1996. If Palestinian elections do not happen, she said, she's afraid to think what might happen. Yet the center keeps working—and hoping. "If we can keep people's morale up," Lucy said, "good will come."

'Good will come': *Lucy Nusseibeh*

Settlements: One of the most divisive issues in the West Bank concerns the presence of Israeli settlements. Israeli Jews are moving into the West Bank and building houses, usually on one of the many ridges in the area around Jerusalem. Disputes arise over the land used for these. Palestinians claim that much of the land used for settlements is taken from Arab families and that whole villages have been destroyed. Settlers claim that they only use government land, which belongs to Israel as a result of the Six-Day War in 1967.

Since Jerusalem is under Israeli jurisdiction, many settlements have been built within its borders. But the borders keep expanding, and no one seems to agree on what the borders of the city are. A new settlement there, for example, plans to include 30,000 new settlers, which will make it twice the size of the next largest settlement.

We talked with Palestinians, like Muhanna Arab, whose homes are on the verge of being taken over by settlers. Another example of a home surrounded by a settlement is that of Su'ad Darwhid, a Palestinian woman

Hearing with a third ear

Throughout the West Bank there is no civil authority—no police force, no courts, not even stoplights—yet there is little crime. What happens when there is a theft, or even a murder?

Zoughbi Zoughbi is a Palestinian Christian who lives in Bethlehem. He has a master's degree in peace studies from the University of Notre Dame and works for the Middle East Council of Churches doing conflict mediation. He seeks to draw on traditional Arab mediation practices and combine these with what he has learned in the West.

"The peace" is a long tradition in Arab society; it does not replace the civil law but strengthens it, says Zoughbi. Here's what happens, for example, if someone has been killed:

First, the mediator goes to the house of the victim's family and must be accepted for mediation to proceed.

Second, they decide that after a time they will make an "atwah" (a settlement) and agree not to take revenge. The goal is to make a "sulha" (an offer of forgiveness), then talk about restitution.

Third, the killer comes with a white flag, and the parties shake hands, then eat lamb, bread and salt together. An animal must be killed to bring redemption.

The key to mediation, says Zoughbi, is to "hear with a third ear." The mediators go in numbers, taking young people along in order to train them in the work. They also consult with older people.

Who does the killing, the theft? Often, says Zoughbi's brother Nicola, it is collaborators, Arabs hired by Israelis to disrupt Palestinian life.

Mediation depends much on the stability of families and traditional life. But that is breaking down, says Nicola, who is a teacher. Many students do not work hard at school because they don't see any chance for jobs. Many are also aggressive toward teachers; some have even attacked teachers.

Zoughbi is rarely without work.

who was in the hospital the day we stopped by to talk with her. Settlers burned one of her trees one day while she ran an errand. When she dies, her land will most likely be taken by the government, since she has no heirs.

Another group on the verge of losing its small plot of land is the Jahalin Bedouin, which has been on its piece of land north of Jerusalem since the 1950s. They've been ordered to leave, but individuals from Mennonite Central Committee and other groups, including an outspoken Israeli lawyer, Linda Byar, have acted as advocates for them. Thus far, the Bedouins' move to a garbage dump has been forestalled, but according to MCC worker Chip Poston, it's only a matter of time before they are forced to leave.

The Bedouins' support group gave them a cellular phone to use whenever authorities try to evict them. One attempt came in the middle of the night a few months ago. The soldiers arrested the men, and one soldier roughed up a 75-year-old Bedouin woman when she refused to come with them. She then had to be taken to the hospital. By the time the soldiers brought them to the police station, the Bedouins' supporters were there waiting, and their stay was short.

We spent an afternoon with Aliza Prero Herbst, a Jewish woman who is managing director of the Benjamin Foundation and spokesperson for the Binyamin Regional Council. She and her husband and children live in a settlement called Ofra, about 25 kilometers north of Jerusalem. When we picked her up, we gave a ride to another settler who was at a stand in West Jerusalem (the Jewish section).

Aliza explained that few Jewish settlers have cars, and many hitchhike between Jerusalem and their home. Jews will not ride a bus, she said, and they "do not feel safe walking in Arab areas." The Benjamin Foundation has helped fund an emergency rescue service for stranded motorists. One Jewish motorist whose car broke down was killed by Arabs, she said. (Most of the Jews we talked with used the term "Arabs" instead of "Palestinians," since they do not recognize Palestine as a nation.) She pointed out that there are no stoplights in the West Bank because "if you stop you're a target for stones."

Aliza grew up in San Antonio, Texas, and moved to Ofra in 1981. She came to Israel, she said, because it was a young country and she thought she could help bring change. Why stay when she feels so much danger? "Because it's a mission," she said. "The future of Judea and Samaria [what others call the West Bank] is the future of the country." She opposes closure and believes soldiers who shoot or beat Arabs indiscriminantly

Christians in the Holy Land

Only 50 years ago in the Holy Land, Christians made up 45 percent of the population; now it's only 3 percent. Mennonite Central Committee country representative John Lapp says there used to be many Christian villages around Ramallah, north of Jerusalem, but most of the Christians have left.

As the Israeli occupation has made life more difficult, many Christians have moved to other countries. Bethlehem, the town where Jesus was born, used to have a Christian majority, but now only 30 to 40 percent of the population is Christian. A neighboring town, Beit Sahour, is still 85 percent Christian.

One of the trends has been the movement of nomadic Muslims who have been forced from the countryside by Israeli settlements taking the land they used for grazing. This has strained relations between Muslims and Christians as well.

Jack A. Andon, an electrical engineer, moved to Bethlehem three years ago from Iraq, where his business was destroyed by the Gulf War. He says he is less accepted here as a Christian than he was in Iraq. There is more tension between Muslims and Christians than he experienced before, he says.

Christian-Muslim tension: *Jack Andon and his daughter Hiam in Bethlehem*

Most Palestinian Christians belong to either Orthodox or Catholic churches, although there are mainline Protestant and Evangelical churches in the area, and the latter are growing.

One organization, the Christian Embassy, raises money to bring Jews to "the Promised Land" because the group believes this must happen before Christ's return. The Israeli government seems to welcome their help, though CE's beliefs about what happens to Jews when Christ returns may not be made clear to Israelis.

Adnan Musallam, a professor of history, says there are two Bible churches in Bethlehem. The Greek Orthodox have lost many members to Evangelicals, he says. While most Christians are wary of Islamic fundamentalists and oppose the Jewish Right, Adnan adds, "the Evangelical Right is more dangerous than the most right-wing Jews."

In general, though, Christians and Muslims get along fine, he says. Every Christmas Western journalists come and look for conflicts between the two groups. They ignore how much peaceful coexistence they enjoy.

Will not leave: *Eliashiv Drori*

should be punished. She also believes Arabs should have governance over municipalities but not the entire West Bank.

She led us to Shvut Rahel, a community (what others call a settlement) of mostly young families. The members grow flowers organically and plan to export them to Holland. Eliashiv Drori, a personable man in his late 20s, explained their attempts to expand their land by planting fig trees along a hillside. "Sometimes the Arabs take them during the night," he said with a shrug. They are trying to expand onto government-owned land without taking Arab land, he said. They also carry weapons for protection, he said, and shyly showed us the 9 mm pistol in his pants pocket.

What if the government at some point tells them they must leave? "We'll refuse," he said.

In Eli, another settlement, we talked with Mark Lerner, who moved to Israel from the Ukraine 2 1/2 years ago. He is not a Zionist, he said, but he felt there was no future for Jews in the Ukraine. He said that all the land

Hebron

As we approached Hebron, a predominantly Muslim town of 120,000 south of Jerusalem, we saw a long line of cars waiting at an Israeli checkpoint. It was Saturday, "shabbat," so the soldiers knew they were not making settlers wait, since they do not travel on the sabbath.

It was also one year to the day since Baruch Goldstein, a member of Kiryat Arba, an Israeli settlement on the edge of Hebron, went into the Abraham Mosque with a gun and killed 29 people before he was disarmed and beaten to death. And we were there during Ramadan, a holy month of fasting for Muslims. The soldiers were noticeably tense.

Soon a soldier saw our yellow license plate (Palestinian plates are blue) and motioned us forward. We said we wanted to visit the mosque, which is the traditional site where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah and Jacob are buried. Once inside the crowded town, we first went to the Arab Evangelical Elementary School, which the locals call "the Mennonite school," though it is run today by Palestinians. There we picked up Ryan Osborne, a Serving and Learning Together (a program of Mennonite Central Committee) volunteer from Hesston, Kan. Next we visited the mayor of Hebron, Mustafa Abdul Nabi Natshe.

He gave us a brief history of Hebron since the occupation. The last municipal election, he said, was in 1976. He was deposed as mayor in 1983, then returned to office after the Abraham Mosque massacre. The town faces economic straits as it tries to pay debts, which now are about 3 million shekels ($1 million U.S.). Much of the monetary aid they received from Arab countries has stopped since the Gulf War, he said.

There is no local police force, he said. It is difficult to collect taxes, and thefts have increased in Hebron. He is not optimistic about the peace process. He thinks Egypt will be obliged to sign a non-nuclear proliferation treaty but Israel won't.

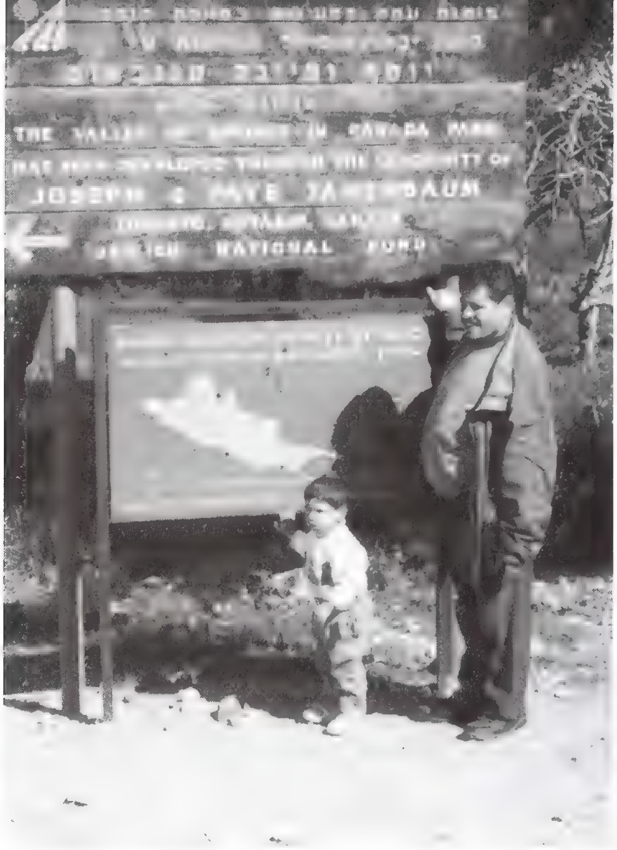
The Abraham Mosque is now mostly closed off between Jews and Muslims. Since the massacre, 68 percent of the space is for Jewish worshipers.

Shot while filming: *Hisham Shviabati*

We spoke with Hisham Shviabati, a journalist in Hebron, who walks with crutches. Last April 3 he was shot by an Israeli soldier while filming for British television a confrontation between Palestinians and Jews. He told us about his grandfather, who was in Hebron in 1929, when the British ruled the area. His grandfather told Hisham that the British encouraged Arabs to kill Jews (64 were killed in one incident). However, some Palestinians hid 20 Jewish families to protect them.

Before leaving Hebron we visited the Goldstein memorial, a lavish monument inside the Kiryat Arba settlement. He is considered a martyr, even though he murdered 29 men, women and children.

After the massacre: *Israelis built this police station in front of the Abraham Mosque since last year's massacre.*



Adnan Abed stands with his son in front of a sign marking Canada Park in the West Bank. Adnan grew up in Imwas, one of three villages here destroyed before the park was built. More than 4,000 people lived in these villages before 1967, when Israeli soldiers evicted everyone, giving them no time to take possessions with them. Later the Jewish National Fund raised money from Canadian donors to build the park. Adnan pointed to where his house had stood and to where his family had an orchard. Stones from the dismantled houses were used to build a monument honoring the donors, who likely had no idea that the park was built on land that had belonged to Palestinian villages.

should be for Jews and that as long as Jews are armed there will be peace. "If Arabs think you are weak," he said, "they will take advantage of you."

Finally we visited Ofra, the oldest settlement in the West Bank, begun in 1975. It includes 270 families (around 1,400 people). "People come for various reasons," Aliza said, "but the ideology is catching."

She showed us Ulpana Ofra, a girls school that has also taken in girls who are among the 15,000 Ethiopian Jews who came to Israel four years ago. Aliza's own daughters go to a coed school, she said. Her feminist values do not fit in well in Ofra, particularly with its dress codes for girls.

Judith Katz, who directs the Ethiopian program at the school, was born in Hungary and grew up in Sweden. She reflected the views of other Jewish settlers when she said that Jews are not safe anywhere but in Israel.

A visit with Jeremy Milgrom a few days later offered a different view. A Conservative rabbi who does not have a congregation, Jeremy said that people who come to Israel are not necessarily fleeing anti-Semitism. He asked, "To what extent is Jewish life in Israel Jewish?" He said he believes that because Jews are in the majority their Jewishness has suffered. The notion of a Jewish state may provide comfort, he said, but it doesn't hold water.

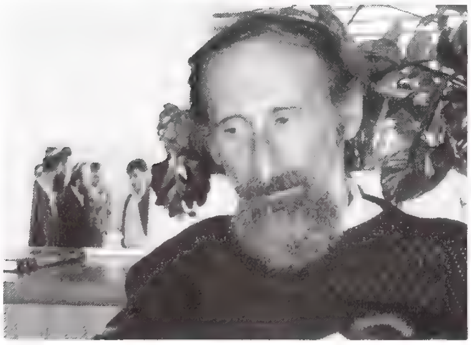
Like nearly all Jews in Israel, he served three years in the army, then returned for periodic stints. But as his convictions developed about peace, he refused to carry a gun. His case did not fit their system. "You can skirt the army from the right but not from the left," he said. Eventually the government just left him alone.

Jeremy believes Arabs and Jews can live together peacefully. But people's beliefs are so entrenched that it will take time. It may take 100 years, he said, until the Palestinians, now 18 percent of Israel's population, become a majority.

Right now, he said, Israel's "colonial blindness" leads it to ignore Palestinians. Israeli policy has only served Israelis. The settlements, he said, show "the clearest disregard for Palestinians." They are a big issue, even though settlers represent only 2 percent of Israelis.

Can settlers ever live with Palestinians? It's dangerous to live in wealth, he said, if you're surrounded by poor people.

The mood among people in the West Bank—Palestinians and Jews—is not one of optimism. Is there hope that peace with justice can happen? Jeremy said he feels positive about the Pales-



Jews must be armed: *Mark Lerner*

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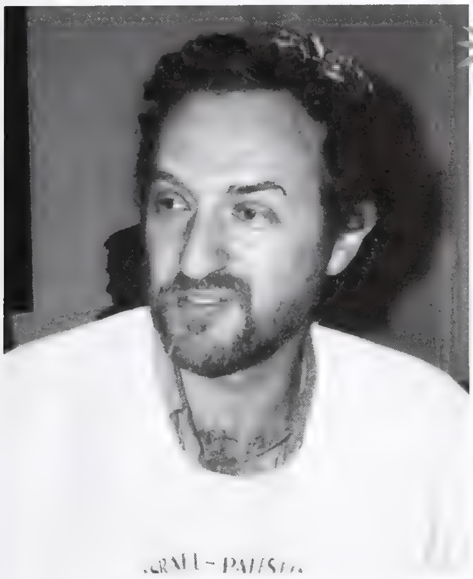
Security: *A store in West Jerusalem*



Israel's 'colonial blindness' leads it to ignore Palestinians: *Jeremy Milgrom*

tinian Centre for Rapprochement, which has brought together Palestinians and Israelis for dialogues, though these have been small and have not continued. (In 1990, MCC became an umbrella for the center to make it legal.)

Through these dialogues the center has tried to show how the occupation affects Palestinians and that Palestinians do not want to destroy Israel. In 1988 they invited 25 Jewish families to Beit Sahour, where they ate with village residents and marched together to Shepherd's Field. Soldiers there wanted the families to go home, but it was the sabbath, and they were not allowed to travel. The soldiers told them they were in danger, but one Israeli said he had never felt safer in his life. The families spent the night in Palestinian homes.

Such demonstrations are a sign of hope, but the amount of hatred and injustice to overcome is daunting. One settler, when asked what it would take for his son not to carry a gun when he turned 18, said, "The Messiah will have to come." Indeed.

Gordon Houser is editor of The Mennonite.

Mennonites in the Middle East

Mennonite Central Committee sent an investigative team to Jordan and the West Bank in the summer of 1948, while the Arab-Israeli war was still in progress. By the end of that year workers settled in the Jericho area to work with Palestinian refugees from the war.

During the 1950s MCC provided medical assistance and vocational training and distributed clothing, food and bedding. In the early 1960s MCC emphasized self-help programs and education. It began a boarding school in Beit Jala in 1961 for economically disadvantaged boys.

The 1967 Six-Day War divided the MCC Jordan program into two units, one serving the East Bank from Amman and the other serving the occupied West Bank from East Jerusalem.

In the 1970s MCC opened an agricultural/rural development program, which introduced improved olive seedlings, drip irrigation, grape trellising, agricultural road construction and land reclamation.

More indigenous leadership developed, and the Beit Jala Mennonite school became the Hope Secondary School, run by the Arab Charitable Society of Beit Jala. The needlework program became a self-governing women's cooperative in 1982.

MCC West Bank continues to pursue rural development through partnership with Palestinian agricultural and development groups. It is also the primary sales outlet for the Sureif Women's Cooperative. MCC supports the Economic Development Group, which it helped spawn during the 1980s. The EDG provides credit for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

MCC also cooperates with Palestinian groups in social services, education and relief. More recently its emphasis has been on making people more aware of the concerns of the Palestinian people. MCC also assists individuals and groups visiting the Holy Land, matching foreign visitors with Palestinians, Middle Eastern Christians and Jewish peace workers.

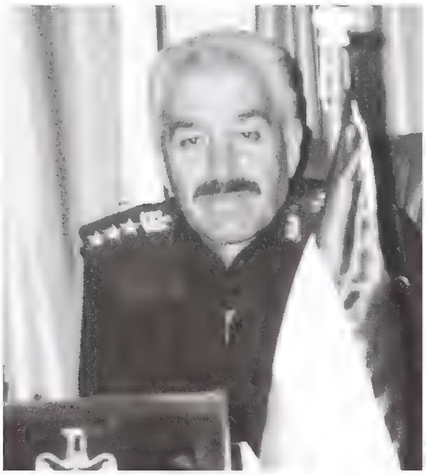
Hope Secondary School in Beit Jala, West Bank, begun by Mennonites, is now run by Palestinians. Mennonites have worked in the Middle East since 1948.

Gaza: autonomous but not free from poverty

The Gaza Strip, lying along the Mediterranean coast, is considered one of the most densely populated places on earth. Last year Palestinians there cheered as Palestine Liberation Organization head Yassir Arafat walked through the crowds as the hero who helped bring autonomy to the million or so people of Gaza.

Now the cheering has ended, and a gnawing hopelessness has set in. As you travel through Gaza City you see much traffic, businesses along the street, children heading for school. But you also see sewage, children in rags, decimated buildings.

When the Israelis left Gaza and gave Palestinians autonomy, they left a shattered infrastructure from 27 years of occupation. Brigadier General Ghazi Al Jabali, manager of the Palestinian police in Gaza, told us when we met in his office that the peace accords did not bring anything good. "Only the police, and you can't eat police." In the previous week, he said, they had investigated eight cases of stealing, all because of hunger.


'You can't eat police': *Brigadier General Ghazi Al Jabali*

Like others we had talked with, the police chief accused Israel of supporting Hamas, a party that is vying with Arafat's Fatah party for leadership of Palestinians. In fact, he said, Israel created Hamas to oppose Arafat. People in Hamas have told him this, he claimed.

A short time later we met with Imad Il Falouji, who directs the Islamic Association, which provides social and cultural services. It helps 8,000 children, helps prisoners' families and provides health care for those injured during the intifada, but does not work on political issues. About 120 people work in the association, the only one doing such work in Gaza. It helps 1,500 families and 3,000 orphans. Mennonite Central Committee recently gave money to provide bathroom facilities for a kindergarten in Gaza City that the Islamic Association supports.

Shattered infrastructure: *A street scene in Gaza City*

As we talked with Imad we learned that he is a leader in Hamas. Does Israel support Hamas? we asked. He smiled, then vaguely denied that Hamas receives support from Israel.

We visited a health clinic in the Jabaliah refugee camp. MCC recently contributed toward a dental X-ray machine. The clinic, which opened in 1985, is in desperate need of funding, said Dr. Tayssil Barkoni. The refugee camps in Gaza include 100,000 people. Of those in the Jabaliah camp, the doctor said, 84 percent have parasites due to bad water.

MCC also helps an agriculture project in Gaza. It paid for 80 percent of the cost of a refrigeration unit that allows flower growers to keep their flowers fresh before they export them to Europe. To export, they must go through an Israeli company. Again, water is a problem. The 3,000 Israeli settlers that still live in Gaza use 30 percent of the area's water.

Raji Sourani directs the Gaza Center for Rights and Law, which began in 1985. He had been arrested two weeks earlier by the Palestinian National Authority for trying to cancel the military court set up by Arafat. After 16 hours the authorities released him because of pressure from Palestinians and others from around the world. The police received 58 faxes in his support.

Sonya and Alain Epp Weaver, MCC workers teaching English in the West Bank village of Zababidah, are considering moving to Gaza in August to evaluate whether MCC should have more of a presence there.

Leaving Gaza for Israel was like leaving the Third World for the First World.

Scenes from the West Bank

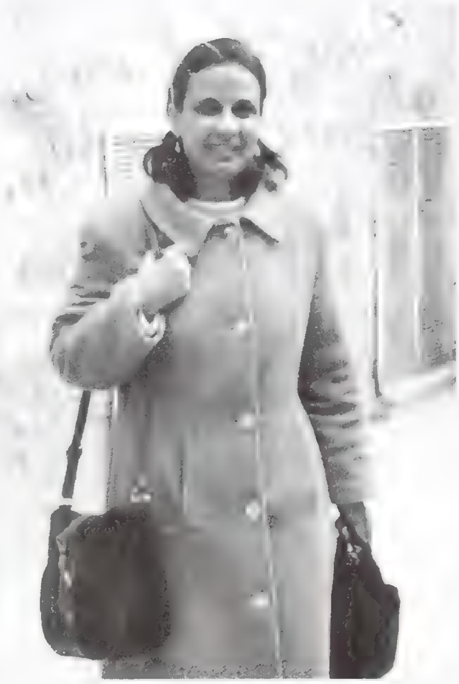
Two Jewish girls in the Kiryat Arba settlement

A shepherd boy in Hebron

This Palestinian shopkeeper in East Jerusalem showed us his property tax bill, which was over 8,000 shekels (almost $2,700 U.S.) for his 9-by-15-foot shop.

Two children in the Jahalin Bedouin camp

Soldiers with their semiautomatic weapons slung over their shoulders were a common sight.



This Palestinian woman showed us the way to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, then asked me what denomination I was a member of. When I said Mennonite, she said, "Oh, I know of Mennonites. They help with schools."

Letters

IDENTIFIED WITH JERRY KEIPER

I just wanted you to know how much I appreciated your personal reflections relating to Jerry Keiper in the Feb. 14 issue of *The Mennonite*. For some reason I identified a lot with Jerry and resonated with the words you spoke regarding love and friendship. And the quote you shared from him ("I live the way I do with the commitments I make because it is the only way to be true to myself.") was evocative of a quote of Abraham Lincoln's that I came across in the past several weeks: "I desire so to conduct the affairs of this administration that if at the end, when I come to lay down the reins of power, I have lost every other friend on earth, I shall at least have one friend left, and that friend shall be down inside me." Both of these quotes touched me and rang true within my being.

Inside
Mennonite

And the cover picture of that issue was a real beaut! And a delight! *Doug Reichenbach, Elkhart, Ind.*

TOUCHED BY JESSE'S LOVE

I'm really enjoying the articles in *The Mennonite*. I look forward to receiving the next issue in the mail almost as soon as I'm done reading the current one.

I'm hoping to see some articles on the Mennonite way of the biblical aspects of faith and prayer in some of your upcoming issues.

I truly enjoyed the story of Uncle Jesse and Aunt Lydia (Feb. 14 issue). I cried when I read it, because Jesse's love for his wife, no matter what, touched my heart. I pray that our society may come to see more and more of this type of love and commitment between married couples as time marches on. A relationship like Jesse had with his wife is truly a blessing from God.

Keep up the great work and may God continue to bless you and keep you as you share his Word with others. *Chrystal Reichenbach, Marysville, Ohio*

SOUND READING MATERIAL

I have just completed reading the Feb. 14 issue of *The Mennonite*, not only from cover to cover but both covers as well, and must express my satisfaction and delight over its contents. You are to be complimented on the product of your labor. The Conference of Mennonites [sic] needs to feel pride in this excellent magazine.

I did find it amusing that [in the photos] Uncle Jesse and the panhandler seemed to be the same person.

God bless you in your effort to supply us with sound reading material. *John H. Loewen, Saskatoon*

TAKE THE BIBLE AS IT IS

Galatians 5:21 says, "They that do these things [adultery, fornication] shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Romans 1:24, 32 says, "God gave them up to uncleanness through lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies. … also have pleasure in them that do them."

We have to take the Bible (God's true word) as it is. The Lord does not change. Why should man want to change it and say something it does not say?

It is time our leaders say, "Sin is sin." We need to hate sin and love the sinner. We must all appear before the judgment seat and give account some day. God will be our judge. Jesus called us to follow him. *Max H. Waltner, Freeman, S.D.*

READ THIS BOOK

In the face of continuing discussions about the relationship between the church and people of homosexual orientation, I want to invite people on both sides of the issue to read the recently published book *Stranger at the Gate: To Be Gay and Christian in America* by Mel White, published by Simon and Schuster. It is an autobiographical account of the anguished struggles of a devout Christian gay man, who knew from early childhood that he was "different." It sheds light on the possibility of changing sexual orientation, the interpretation of scriptural passages relating to this question and the impact of the Christian Right on the anti-gay climate in this country.

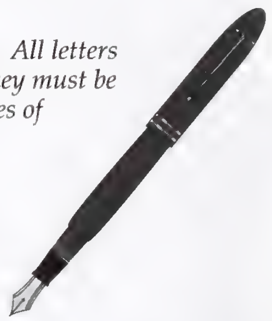
People with gay family members or gay friends, as well as church members and church leaders, will benefit from reading this important book. *Eleanor Kaufman, Newton, Kan.*

MISQUOTED BY LETTER WRITERS

When people criticize my letters, I wish they would at least quote me correctly. Jerry Stanaway claims I said that a human embryo was not human (March 14 issue). I said that it was not a human *being*. In the same way that a chicken is not an egg.

Scott Brubaker-Zehr claims that I do *not* want to hear from overseas workers (his italics). I actually wrote, "But not too many stories of … " *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*



FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Taiwan—We would like to share with you a recent demonstration of God's power at our hospital. A baby was born with diabetes. The pediatricians were having great difficulty controlling the diabetes and were puzzled as to its cause, since this is most rare. This went on for several weeks. The parents were not Christians. Because of this crisis, the parents decided to accept Christ as their savior, and then convenanted with their pastor to pray every four hours around the clock for their baby. Not long after that, the baby improved and then was finally completely healed. We praise God with this new Christian family for [God's] wonderful healing power. *Chris and Lois Leuz*

WM

THE
Mennonite

March 24, 1995

WINDOW TO MISSION

BUILDING BRIDGES
within the Christian community

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.

Psalm 133:1,3

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Cover photo credit: Bek Linsenmeyer

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Women meeting women:

How it happened in one church

by Amanda Rempel

Origins of the group

It was on a winter evening two years ago that I mentioned a desire to be part of a women's small group to my circle of friends. Another woman said, "I might be interested too. Let me know if you start something." Two or three others were contacted. Three of us began meeting weekly for sharing and prayer. The sharing was intense as we were all working with significant issues: a first child away from home in college, a serious marital crisis, the task of working on some kind of closure for a husband's unfaithfulness. We did not publicize our group. And once we got started we did not invite others to join us. The three of us middle-aged women met each week until summer.

In the fall we heard that another woman new to the church had expressed interest in a women's small group to her mentor. They gave an invitation for any women in the church to join a new women's group. The three of us who had met the previous year decided we would join this new group, rather than having two very small groups.

I was willing to provide leadership for such a group and was delighted when asked to lead. Our new group was much more diverse, including married women with children in the home, single women, widowed women and "empty nesters." Our ages ranged from around 30 to 70. Some of us had been in the church most of our lives, several were new Christians and one member from the community had not participated in a church for 15 years.

With so much diversity, what could we do together?

Commonly expressed longings were:

- to get to know other women better,
- to experience Christian support,
- to pray for each other.

To help us get to know each other better and also to experience Christian support, we took turns, one woman

each week, sharing our story. We included things about our family of origin, education, life with God, vocation, marriage and children, and highs and lows in our life experience. Telling our stories was easier for some than others. It did give each of us a sense of being valued by the group.

After we had each told our story to the group, we began reflecting on stories from the New Testament where Jesus related to women. It was amazing how Jesus' interaction with women in the gospels often intersected with our experience. We always included a time for sharing and intercessory prayer. We prayed as a group and also in twos and threes. We sometimes had significant agenda: irresponsible adult children, health problems, death of a parent, vocational changes.

In the second half of the year, someone suggested we do some easy exercises together before our meetings. So in the fellowship hall, with video instruction, we stretched, rolled and panted together.

A fun-loving member suggested we each take a personality test she had seen and discuss the results in our group. We found some predictable and some surprising results. We laughed at ourselves and with each other.

While each of the women in the Women's Support Group, as we came to be called, had likely been invited to participate in the "official" women's group in the church, only two or three of us occasionally participated. The official women's group focused on service. Our group emphasized relationships with each other and with God. Both groups are valid and needed in the church.

What impact did the group have?

It was a joy for all of us when the member from our community said one evening, "I've decided this is my church." She had begun attending worship services, and formalized her claim by joining the church on our Christmas celebration Sunday.

My life was enriched and my walk with God strengthened as a result of meeting with these dear sisters over the course of two years. Because of our family's relocation this past summer I am no longer a part of the Women's Support Group at the Topeka (Ind.) Mennonite Church. Given the opportunity, I would eagerly participate in such a group again.

Amanda Rempel serves as half-time chaplain with Kidron Bethel Retirement Services. She now lives in Newton, Kan., with her husband, Clarence, who pastors at First Mennonite, and three of their four children.

Lessons learned in conflict transformation

by Carolyn Schrock-Shenk

About a year ago in a church meeting to discuss the issue of women in leadership, I made a remark that offended Mark (not his real name) deeply. It followed a weekend of working together on direct communication and conflict transformation.

Mark came up to me within 10 minutes after the end of the meeting. "I wanted to follow our agreed-upon way of dealing with this and talk to you directly." He proceeded to tell me how my comment had affected him. I listened carefully, did some talking to myself to keep from becoming defensive, and then responded. I agreed that the remark, while unintentional, was insensitive. I asked for his forgiveness and he granted me that willingly.

We continued to talk about the issue of women in leadership for a few more moments. I did not agree with his views, but I was impressed with his thoughtful responses and his commitment to faithfulness. He did not agree with my views, but his last words to me were, "We don't agree on this issue but I accept and respect your position." I will always remember that interaction.

Mark gave me three gifts:

- direct, respectful communication,
- willing forgiveness,
- nonjudgmental acceptance of a different point of view.

He modeled the most important elements of conflict transformation that I had tried to teach during the weekend training.

Since I began to work with conflict as part of my job, I have learned and changed and grown. I have made many mistakes and have been humbled again and again. What follows is a collection of some of my most significant learnings:

1. As long as I am alive and breathing, I will have conflict. God could have guaranteed a conflict-free world by creating a world of sameness. The Genesis creation story, however, is of amazing diversity. Pronounced "good" by the God who created it, diversity nonetheless breeds conflict. People wanting, needing or believing different things is the natural result of God's gift of uniqueness. Conflict is normal, inevitable and, in itself, not sinful. Sin enters through our destructive and sometimes violent responses to conflict.

2. The attitude I bring to conflict situations is critical in determining whether or not the conflict will be constructive. Many of us believe that conflict is wrong, a sign of weak spirituality. Conflict can produce fresh truth, new understanding, growth, change and strengthened relationships. Harvesting good fruit from conflict is largely dependent upon my ability to accept or even welcome conflict and humbly ask, "What can I learn from this?"

3. I really can learn to manage conflict better. Because many of us have learned to avoid conflict, we have not learned the mechanics of working through it successfully. Good listening, clear, respectful speaking and creative problem solving are basic skills accessible to all. They do not come naturally, however, and they must be practiced and improved over a lifetime.

4. Good listening is the most tangible sign of respect, which is the most critical element in transforming conflict. It was painful some time ago to realize that I didn't know how to listen well. Most of us don't. We think about our own agenda, what we want to say next, and we miss the essence of what the speaker would like us to understand. Good listening is a must, but it is extremely difficult, especially in the heat of conflict. The more I am able to shelve my concerns, opinions and emotions—even momentarily—and really listen to the other person, the more likely the conflict will be transformed.

5. Respect doesn't mean agreeing, giving in or condoning what the other person is saying or doing. I have to do a lot of talking to myself to remember this one. It often feels like I am "losing" when I am listening respectfully and trying to understand what is being communicated to me. In reality, respect simply means that I allow you, without judgment, to have your perspective. In return, I tell you, without coercion or condescension, my perspective. That is the basis for true dialogue.

6. The hardest conflict work is with those closest to me. The more interdependent the relationship and the more I am invested in it, the more difficulty I seem to have applying these things I am learning. This has implications not only for my nuclear family, but for my church family as well. This awareness helps me be patient, both with myself and others.

7. Knowing when to ask for help is essential. Even if my attitude is open and welcoming and my skills top-notch, there are times when I will need the help of a third party to work through a conflict with someone. I have needed this in my job and in my marriage. I believe a sign of strength and maturity is being able to ask for help when I need it.

8. In conflict, as in anything else, I can only change myself. Generally my strong desire is to change the other person—their desires, their actions, their beliefs. That effort wastes energy and escalates the conflict. So I try to work on me—and to remember that any change I make changes the situation.

9. The rocky soil of conflict is truly holy ground. Even in times when sin and evil are clearly present, I find the Holy Spirit breaking through in amazing ways—nurturing, fertilizing, cultivating, guiding. And always, when I am open and willing, the Spirit produces good fruit from that rocky soil. Not only is conflict transformed in all of this, but I am being transformed as well. And that is what this Christian life is all about.

Carolyn Schrock-Shenk is the associate director of Mennonite Conciliation Service, a program of Mennonite Central Committee U.S., and a member of Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster, Pa. She is married to Dave Schrock-Shenk and they are the new parents of Caleb, who is 4 years old and, according to his parents, "truly wonderful!"

Mending song

by Muriel T. Stackley

Suggested accompanying Scripture: Psalm 80

Lord, in our brokenness, we come to you.
Hear us, O Lord, for you are adored.
We need your grace to make all things new.
We need your peace that we be restored.

Strengthen our hearts to live in your light.
Break down the walls that keep us apart.
Help us to live the words that unite.
Give us the courage needed to start.

Praise to you, Lord. You call us to live.
Filled with your love, we dare to make peace.
As you forgive us, so we forgive.
As you embrace us, we find release.

Can be sung to the tune of No. 418 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, "Move in our midst, thou Spirit of God."

Muriel T. Stackley, Newton, Kan., is coordinator of the Newton Area Peace Center, the mother of two sons and a daughter, and a member of New Creation Fellowship in Newton.

AMBS 1994-1995 WM scholarship recipients: (left to right) Rachel Clemens, Muriel T. Stackley, Jeni Hiett Umble and Debra A. Schmidt

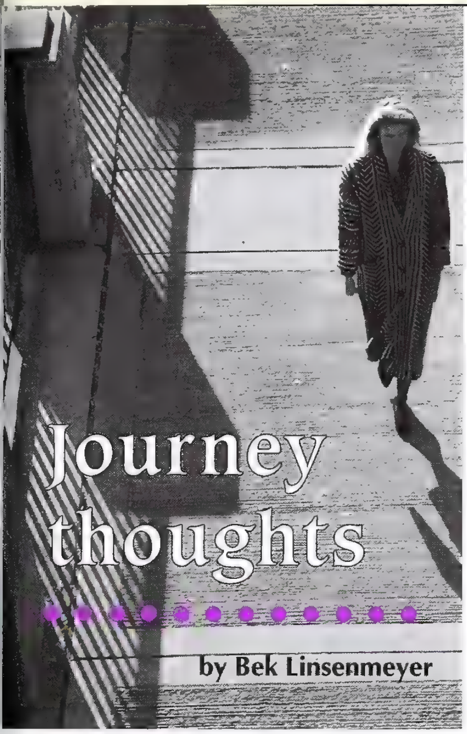
1994-1995 AMBS scholarship recipients

Rachel Clemens, in her third year of study at AMBS, writes: "I have been very thankful over the past several years that your organization has been willing to support my studies at AMBS. This year is no exception. Your support has made it possible for me to work toward finishing an M.Div. degree this May. ... I am working at discerning the ministry setting to which God is calling me. Thank you once again for your support."

Debbie Schmidt began studying with Great Plains Seminary (Newton, Kan.) 15 years ago while raising her family and working as a nurse. She, her husband and youngest son moved to Elkhart, Ind., for Debbie's one year of full-time study needed to complete her M. Div. degree. She writes: "I want to send you a very hearty thank you for the $1,000 contribution toward my scholarship at AMBS. It means a great deal to our family and was a very generous gesture. ... I am having a wonderful year exploring ministry, experiencing worship and developing relationships. That feels like a real gift at this time in my life."

Muriel T. Stackley, former editor of *The Mennonite*, took one semester's leave from her position as coordinator for the Newton (Kan.) Area Peace Center. Muriel writes: "Thanks very much for the AMBS designation of $500 toward my fall '94 semester at seminary. I pray that I will be a good investment for you, and offer myself in whatever way you might find that investment (M.A. in theological studies) useful to WM."

Jeni Hiett Umble's study as a second-year M. Div. student includes an internship in a local congregation. Jeni writes: "Thank you for your significant contribution to my financial aid. I am able to study at AMBS full time only because such aid is available. ... Studying here has been a dream of mine for some time. I appreciate your support."



Journey thoughts

by Bek Linsenmeyer

As four of us were talking after a meal one friend audibly sucked in her breath and said, "Oh no, we're going to argue," when one of the women shared something she thought I ought to consider. What fear was my friend expressing? That someone would be offended? That I would reject the viewpoint (or maybe the person)? That some things are just better left unsaid? Did she feel that if conflict comes into a relationship it's a sign of failure?

In our wedding ceremony the pastor said that if my husband and I never argued then one of us was unnecessary to the relationship. In mediation we say conflict is inevitable. But I'd never understood why until I saw a book about relationships* where the authors state that there are four stages of relationships: visionary, adversarial, dormant and vital. What a relief to recognize that all significant relationships pass through four predictable stages and that one of them—the adversarial stage—will involve conflict.

I note that Jesus had at least two instructions for us when we are involved in conflict: To the victim, go to the one who has offended you (Matthew 18:15-17); to the offender, go to the one you have offended (Matthew 5:23, 24). We might say, "I can't win"—and that is exactly the point. It is not about winning, but about being together. It is also about recognizing that if I quit on this relationship, I will have to go through the same stages in the next relationship.

But how do I go to the other? Carolyn Schrock-Shenk (pages 5-6) offers some learnings from her work in conflict transformation. When I need to sort through a conflict with a friend, I might take a copy of Carolyn's article and suggest we each read it before we share our perception of the problem. It could help bring us to a place where we condemn less and bless more, where forgiveness can be offered although we recognize the wrong that has been done.

For you and for me conflicts will arise. In the times of struggle, I hope that we can look back to our original vision for that relationship and hold on to the promise that we first saw.

Bek Linsenmeyer works one-third time as WM editor. Bek, her husband Dean, and their children Eliot and Anna call Inman, Kan., home.

**Connecting with Self and Others,* Sherod Miller et al, Interpersonal Communications Programs, Inc., Littleton, Colo., 1988.

The Anabaptist Biblical Institute

by Violeta Ajquejay
Commission on Home Ministries

Adela Lopez, a retired member of Comunidad de Fe Church in Chicago, said, "I am taking classes so I can have more general Bible knowledge. I have taken three courses, I have learned a lot, and I am glad for that."

Adela and over 100 others are students of the Anabaptist Biblical Institute, which was established in 1988 as a program of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM). It is providing Anabaptist leadership training for Spanish-speaking church members. The Institute's program is designed for home study. Most of the students are working adults who want more formal Bible study.

For Consuelo Moreno, member of House of the Lord Fellowship in La Puente, Calif., a long-time dream is now a reality. She said, "I tried to enroll in other institutions and I asked 'Lord, help me to be accepted,' but the doors were always closed. As a mother of four children, the Anabaptist Institute is good for me, because I do not have to leave home to study. Our weekly class day is a day we already come to church, so I don't have to alter my schedule. The studies are practical, the material is self-taught and easy to understand. I can make it."

Violeta Ajquejay, associate director of the Anabaptist Biblical Institute, is from Guatemala, where she was raised in a family of five and baptized in the Iglesia Evangelica (Evangelical Church), a conservative Protestant church. Violeta now attends Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.

As a senior at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., Violeta did pregraduate practical training at the Hispanic Ministries office of CHM. The Anabaptist Biblical Institute was established at the same time Violeta began work with Hispanic Ministries. As the program grew, so did her responsibilities. The Hispanic Leadership Program supports Violeta's current leadership training through the Hesston College Pastoral Ministries Program. The program has been enriching and helpful in her work with the Institute.

The majority of Institute students are women who want more Bible knowledge to help them better use their gifts. "I now know my doctrine, I have more self-confidence from having studied. It is like having a door open wider," said Consuelo, who has taught adult, youth and children's classes, and has also preached. Adela responded that "the Intro to Bible Study course has helped me teach the adult class. I have also been helping in the growth groups." Consuelo added, "In my church the women move in all kinds of leadership roles. It is important to train leaders so we can go out and minister. We have a vision that from our church will come missionaries, pastors and evangelists!"

General Conference Hispanic Mennonite church members are subsidized with scholarships through the Commission on Home Ministries budget. They pay a $25 tuition fee per course and a $15 registration fee, while other students pay $45 in tuition plus registration.

Curriculum and conflict

by Norma Johnson
Commission on Education

"Did you hear about the book one of the adult Sunday school classes is studying? I can't believe our church would use a book like that."

"Our Education Committee has such a hard time getting Sunday school teachers we finally agreed to let the teachers choose what they want to teach. We'll be ordering from several different companies."

"I'm so excited that our new children's Sunday school curriculum is up-to-date with educational methods. The color, design and art are first rate. And best of all it is sound biblically."

"I have heard that some individuals have raised questions about the new children's curriculum."

COE staff members have heard these comments at weekend teacher training events or in congregations. Curriculum choice is an important decision. Opinions vary and disagreements can easily arise. The following four principles may not only bring clarity to your selection of study materials, they may also help you understand why conflict will be part of the decision-making process.

1. Every curriculum has a theology; no curriculum is theologically neutral. It is important to recognize theological differences among curricula. The teaching in a congregation should reflect its theological foundations.

2. The preaching and the teaching in a congregation should be compatible. Teaching in the Sunday school, preaching and Bible study during the week should be mutually supportive. Does the emphasis from the pulpit match that in your Sunday school? This is how biblical knowledge and a consistent faith develop.

3. Selecting curriculum is a congregational matter. Curriculum selection is an especially crucial issue in the faith development of children and young believers. Beware that the teaching program does not become a smorgasbord with repetitions and gaps. A variety of theologies and inconsistent faith perspectives may inadvertently be taught. The congregation wants assurance that its curriculum deals with the whole gospel and reflects its historic, biblical faith.

4. Curriculum grows out of a people. Curriculum is stronger when writers, consultants, editors, manuscript readers and congregational communicators are involved. Resource materials that rely on one or two individuals do not benefit from community feedback.

In choosing curriculum, strong, open communication is needed so that differing opinions can be heard, discussed and resolved.

Additional ideas are included in *Keeping the Faith, Choosing Curriculum for Your Congregation,* a pamphlet available from the Commission on Education, P.O. Box 347, 722 Main St., Newton, KS 67114.

Norma Johnson is executive secretary for the Commission on Education. She is a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan.

Defying the dongas:
Bridge building in the African church

by Jonathan Larson
Commission on Overseas Mission

Any visitor to Lesotho cannot help but notice what are locally known as "dongas"—deep gullies that scar the flanks of majestic hills. Slashing across meadows and towns, they remind us of another reality: the deep divisions in Southern Africa. Some of the deepest rifts have been within the African church, cleavages that mar an otherwise radiant community.

Not many months into our assignment in Botswana, Mary Kay and I realized there were deep suspicions between the African Independent Churches (AICs)–the churches that Mennonites had come to serve. Mission-founded churches and the AICs were also widely separated. I remember a British missionary asking me once in all seriousness, "Well, have you encountered any Christians in those AIC groups yet?"

Such attitudes make sharing mission or confessing common faith a demanding challenge for Mennonites in Southern Africa. Even so, Mennonites in recent years have served as intermediaries between AICs and mission churches. Lately, one of the mission church training institutions, Kgolagano College in Gabarone, Botswana, sought Mennonite help in beginning a dialogue with AICs about such core cultural questions as healing ministry, African Christian worship, leadership training, and the history that led to the yawning emotional gulf between them.

Years of patient Bible study and training together at the invitation of Mennonite workers have laid a quiet basis for growing friendship between AICs. With support from Mennonite workers, Botswana AICs are creating a book of common worship resources and outlining shared training programs. At a recent discussion considering other ways to bridge the gaps, one leader rose to ask, "Brothers and sisters, if we refuse to share our blankets here on earth, what prospect is there that we will be permitted to share them in heaven?" (In the mountains of Southern Africa, sharing blankets is highly recommended.) After years of division, the AICs in Botswana and neighboring countries are on their way toward mutual affirmation.

Our last days in Botswana were memorable for an ordination gathering of choirs, bishops and the faithful of many AICs, and also members of the mission-founded churches. It seemed to be a sign that no "donga"—no chasm—within this family of faith is too wide but that the Holy Spirit will devise a way to bridge it. For a while, we were sent to inhabit those gaps and now confess to wonder and gratitude that we were witnesses to their closing.

Jonathan Larson worked with African Independent Churches while in Botswana. His ordination before leaving Africa was described in Vol. LXI of the *AIMM Messenger,* 1994, pages 8-9. He and his wife Mary Kay are now living in Atlanta. They have three daughters.

Hand to hand, woman to woman

by Terri J. Plank Brenneman, president WMSC

Grabbing the handrail, I steadied myself as the hanging footbridge lurched beneath my step. Ropes, wires and wooden planks stretched high across the deep, lush gorge. What inspired this crazy idea and how did they get the ropes and wires from one side to the other?

Usually I'm unaware of the structure of the bridges I cross, taking the convenience for granted. But the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, a covered bridge in rural Indiana, or the hanging bridge mentioned earlier, inspire awe. Someone saw a way to bridge the impossible, then labored to give this gift to the world.

I envision the Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) of the Mennonite Church as a bridge of hands linking woman to woman: hand bridges from church to church, from urban center to rural farmland, from the Two-thirds World to North America, from the spiritually rich to the materially rich. Both Women in Mission (WM) and WMSC labor to build these bridges by supporting mission work through financial and material gifts and by providing devotional materials and scholarships. There appear to be many good reasons for building more bridges between our organizations.

The similarity of our mission statements and goals spurs us to dream of bridges that will further the work of our two groups. Envisioning the bridge is the first step. Drawing up the plans and supervising the construction bring the vision into reality. The blueprint and construction materials must allow for the stress and turbulence the bridge must withstand.

Last October the executive committees of WM and WMSC met together. We were encouraged by the richness of the fellowship we shared and by the expansion of our awareness because of our diversity. We have commitments and backgrounds that are unique and run deep. Such differences create whirlpools our bridges must endure.

Turbulent waters seem impossible to cross. We wonder whether all the plans and dreams will work, whether the end result will be worth the struggle.

At the end of my rocking trek over the gorge, an exotic garden greeted me. Breathing in deeply the stillness, my heart reverberated—yes! The vision, the blueprint, the ingenuity, the labor required to accomplish this feat were well worth the effort.

When we have dreamed dreams and had visions that reality seems to crush, we have this assurance: "For nothing will be impossible with God" (Luke 1:37). Let us dream grandly, strive valiantly and trust God to do the impossible in our lives and in our organizations.

Terri J. Plank Brenneman is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Pasadena, Calif., and also an assistant clinical professor at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena. Terri leads music and worship at Pasadena Mennonite Church where her husband, Jim, is pastor.

Roundtable

by Susan Jantzen

British Columbia is the site of the Women in Ministry Conference May 26-28 at Columbia Bible College in Clearbrook. The theme is "A Celebration of Global Sisterhood: Exploring the Mystery and Seasons of Spirituality of Life." Speakers will include Elizabeth Tapia of the Philippines and Susan Classen, a former MCC worker in El Salvador. Contact Miriam Ruiz at MCC British Columbia, (604) 850-6639.

Betty Bauman, our General Conference Women in Mission representative in the Eastern District, suffered an aneurysm in September. She has come out of her coma and is recuperating at home. Join us in sending prayers her way. Her address is: 2025 Bauman Rd., Quakertown, PA 18951.

U.S. women: Do you have time for some letter writing? The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund is engaged in an effort to send 10,000 letters to Congress in support of a Peace Tax Fund bill. This bill offers a legal alternative to those who wish to have the military portion of their taxes go into a Peace Tax Fund for constructive and compassionate uses. Write to your senators and congressional representatives; refer to S-2028 in the Senate and H.R.-2019 in the House. This bill could come up for a vote in April. For more information contact Marian Franz at the Peace Tax Fund, 2121 Decatur Place, NW, Washington, DC 20008 or phone (202) 483-3751.

"Teasing and name calling turned to shoving and hitting on the playground. Neither I nor the principal had time to help the two boys sort out the disagreement," my husband Jim, a fifth grade teacher, lamented.

Taking time and knowing how to resolve relational clashes is important. It is even more important in the church. First, because Christ taught us to be loving, even as we struggle with each other.

Second, because we as the church, the body of Christ here on earth, have a task. That is, share the gospel through words, actions and life example. How much more energy we can give to that when we tend to our clashes.

For members of women's groups, sharing **feedback** with group leaders, or inviting feedback if you are a group leader, is a **key** to keeping clashes from draining valuable group energy.

A resource to encourage group feedback will be sent to each WM group in early April in the annual mailing to each group from the GCWM office in Newton, Kan. It includes a variety of checklists to use for evaluating your group's past program activity. **Take time** to use this. Your group life is worth it!

Susan Jantzen, WM coordinator, works half-time for Women in Mission. Susan, her husband Jim, and their sons Peter and Robbie live in Newton, Kan.

Facts and figures

Wichita '95—July 25-30 in Wichita, Kan.

You are invited to come to Wichita this summer! Of particular interest to women will be:

- a women's dinner on Thursday evening
- a WM/WMSC business meeting Friday noon
- seminars led by women
- a five-minute WM report to the General Assembly Saturday afternoon

Financial Goals and Mail-in Ballot Coming Soon

Your women's group received a mailing from the Newton GCWM office in late March. Please allow time in your April meeting for GCWM business. You will receive 20 copies of our financial goals, an explanation of the integration/cooperation proposal and a ballot. The ballot will cover three issues: (1) a vote on the revised constitution, (2) a vote to affirm a new committee appointment and (3) your vote on the proposal for further cooperation or integration with the Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) of the Mennonite Church. Each member of your group will have one vote. Mail your votes back to the Newton office **by May 31.** Results will be announced at the WM/WMSC business meeting, Friday, July 28, at the Wichita '95 triennial conference.

Year-End Financial Report

February 1-January 31	1994	1995
	$202,858 109.7%	$180,349 97.5%

Thank you! Thank you to each woman who contributed financially and in prayer! We have much to share and much is done because of our sharing.

Resources for dealing with conflict:

- *Moving Your Church Through Conflict* by Speed Leas (Alban Institute, 1985) deals with how conflicts develop within congregations and strategies for working though conflict.
- *When You Disagree* (Mennonite Conciliation Service, 1987), an audiocassette series designed to teach skills for dealing with conflict. Ten one-hour sessions.
- *Conflict in the Church: Division or Diversity?* (Mennonite Conciliation Service, 1988) is a 12-minute video about conflict in the church with a study guide and resource suggestions.

Window shopping

If you have access to diaries, letters, biographies or journals that reflect the experience of **Russian Mennonite women in Russia during World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Russian civil war, famine and subsequent immigration to Canada (1914-1930)**, or if you know of someone who could be interviewed, please contact:

Gloria Neufeld Redekop, 5 Beddoe Lane, Gloucester, ON K1B 3X9, Canada; phone/fax: (613)-837-4218; e-mail az 651@freenet.carleton.ca.

ALL HAVE A PLACE AT THE TABLE

MAY FELLOWSHIP DAY
May 5, 1995

The **May Fellowship Day for 1995**, sponsored by Church Women United, extends the theme of World Day of Prayer—"The Earth Is a House for All People"—with its own theme, "All Have a Place at the Table." Regular offerings from May Fellowship Day are used in home communities to carry out local Church Women United ministries. For more information call Church Women United at (800) CWU-5551.

Mary Ellen Derksen, president of Goessel (Kan.) Mennonite Church WM, reported that their group sewed drawstring bags which they then filled with books and toys.* Placed in the rows of the sanctuary used by families with small children, the bags are enjoyed by the children and appreciated by parents. The books, from the church library, are frequently changed and the bags checked each Sunday morning.

*Finger puppets, a prism scope, a slide puzzle, or a small pad of paper and a few colored pencils or crayons could go in a pocket of the bag.

FORECAST

In our summer issue we will explore bridge building within the family. What can the church do to encourage family relationships? Where do grandparents fit in today's family system? How can families move toward wholeness?

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt.

News

MCC foresees a challenging future

Fresno, Calif. (Meetinghouse)—Record-breaking income and a 75th anniversary may seem reason enough for a lot of self-congratulation.

But that's not Mennonite Central Committee's style, as its annual meeting Feb. 17-18 at Bethany Mennonite Brethren Church showed.

Instead, MCC board members focused their attention more on an inevitable reality of the work MCC does: Future challenges loom larger than past successes.

"I feel uncomfortable saying we had a good year because of Rwanda," said board member Melvin Thomas of Lancaster, Pa. "There are incredible needs around the world that are not going to generate the response that Rwanda is getting, and I beg that we not forget that."

Rwanda's refugee crisis did make 1994 an extraordinary year for MCC. Contributions had been lagging until the plight of Rwandan refugees captured the world's attention.

Then a potentially lean year turned into a record-breaker. With $1.6 million U.S./$2.27 million Cdn. of contributions for Rwanda, MCC income soared to $38.8 million U.S./$55 million Cdn. Material aid shipments were the largest since World War II.

Not expecting to duplicate that, the board approved a 1995 budget of $37.7 million U.S./$53.4 million Cdn. The budget is based on projected contributions of $15.4 million U.S./$21.7 million Cdn., 10 percent less than the $17 million U.S./$24 million Cdn. received in 1994.

While grateful for the constituency's generous response to the needs of Rwandans, board members and staff were concerned that giving for relief is increasingly influenced by secular media coverage.

"Significant budget growth depends less on our activities than on other events, largely media-driven," said Berry Friesen, director of administration and resources.

The irony is that MCC's most unique projects, which work at the root causes of human suffering, occur outside the media spotlight.

For example, MCC peacemaking efforts in Somalia bore fruit after Somalia faded from public awareness. Reconciliation work in Rwanda began to bring Hutus and Tutsis together this winter.

Board members agreed that MCC has a role to play in emergency relief, even though long-term development is its greater strength.

"We don't need to respond in the mainstream way," said Karen Klassen Harder, General Conference Mennonite Church representative from North Newton, Kan. "We can be creative."

MCC's working style has changed over time, resulting in a reduction of personnel.

Dwight McFadden, MCC personnel director, distributed data that showed a 25 percent decline in MCC overseas personnel over the past eight years. The most dramatic drop occurred in

Paul Schrag (Meetinghouse)

Planning the future: *Board members at meetings Feb. 17-18 discuss issues affecting the work of Mennonite Central Committee's 900 workers in 50 countries.*

Inside the news

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MCC Canada questions its ability to speak for constituents / p. 15

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The three Mennonite churches in Hong Kong have decided to form into cell groups, report Suanne and Tim Sprunger, mission workers with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. "They feel these changes are crucial in preparing for Hong Kong's future as China takes over in less than 900 days," they write. "These changes mean learning a new style of pastoral leadership and training many group leaders." The three churches have a membership of about 125. The majority of the members are under age 40.

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A team of eight church leaders are reviewing the relationship between U.S. General Conference colleges and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC). The Higher Education Council of the GC formed the team as part of its work to enhance partnership between GC colleges and the denomination. The first review was conducted at Bluffton (Ohio) College Feb. 15-18. The team talked to 50 people representing students, faculty, administration, staff, trustees and local churches. The team commended Bluffton for its effort to articulate its mission, and affirmed the way it has applied this mission to both Mennonites and non-Mennonites. A similar review will take place at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., during the last week in April.

The General Conference Mennonite Church received 92.6 percent or $4,334,556 of its $4,680,807 budget for the 1994 fiscal year, according to Ted Stuckey, business manager and treasurer. The General Conference received $283,453 less in 1994 than 1993.

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Doctoral student Carol Penner, Vineland, Ont., has received $2,500 toward the completion of her dissertation on "Woman Abuse: Mennonite Silences and Feminist Voices" from the Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund. Penner studies at Emmanuel College at the Toronto School of Theology. The fund is sponsored by Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., Mennonite Central Committee Peace Office, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, Mennonite Historical Society of Canada and Mennonite Publishing Service.

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A 75th anniversary conference for Mennonite Central Committee will be held at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., June 4-6. The theme is "The Religious Relief and Development Agency: Directions for the Future." The conference will address issues including South-North tensions; contradictions inherent in service and development; power, justice and peacemaking in effecting societal change; interactions with cultures and governments; priorities for the religious community; cooperation in planning and delivery of services. Registration deadline is May 12. Contact Ron Mathies, professor of peace and conflict studies, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, N2L 3G6, (519) 885-0220.

Emily Will (MCCI)

Quilt of celebration: *Fay Kliewer created this quilt honoring Mennonite Central Committee's 75th anniversary. The quilt was presented to the MCC board Feb. 17. It depicts helping hands rising out of the shadows of war, symbolizing the beginning of MCC. Kliewer, of Aurora, Neb., designed and pieced together the 1,755 two-inch-square fabric blocks of the quilt and reproduced signatures of MCC leaders since 1920 on the MCC logo at the quilt's heart. She incorporated overseas fabrics supplied by Self-Help Crafts.*

Africa, where some 220 workers served in the early 1980s compared with 112 in 1994. Board members cited high education and experience requirements as hindrances to generalists desiring to serve with MCC.

"In the past, MCC thought of itself as a placement agency for people of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ background who wanted to serve. In the last years, MCC has become more oriented toward supplying specialists that the field requests," explained McFadden.

While finding personnel for three-year assignments has become more difficult, more constituency interest is being expressed in shorter people-to-people projects. Congregations, for example, ask MCC to connect them with churches in other parts of the world. Youth request short-term mission opportunities. MCC has hired two part-time consultants to develop a plan for how MCC can facilitate such requests. Their recommendations will be presented at the 1996 MCC annual meeting, to be held in Calgary.

This annual meeting marked MCC's 75th anniversary year. Long-time MCC worker Peter Dyck—whose life was saved by MCC's first relief project in 1920—spoke at the meeting's public program at Fresno Pacific College.

He challenged the audience to live in the "as if" mode—as if the kingdom of God had already come.

"Some will say it is unrealistic or crazy," he said. "It'll get you into trouble. ... It can get you killed. [MCC's founders] were already then in the 'as if' mode. The workers today are doing it because they are in the 'as if' mode.

"Keep on passing it on. Tell it to the children." *Paul Schrag with MCC reports*

MCC U.S. advocates for the poor

Fresno, Calif. (Meetinghouse)—Concerned about proposed government cuts in aid to the poor, the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. board put forth an alternative vision at its annual meeting Feb. 16.

The board approved a statement urging the U.S. government not to abandon its "moral responsibility ... to protect the interests of those who are marginalized by a free-enterprise economy."

It also challenged church members to make lifestyle sacrifices "as an aid to better identification with those in poverty."

The statement "encourages every Mennonite and Brethren in Christ household to initiate one or several activities":

- a regular fast,
- elimination of a costly recreation activity,
- foregoing an addition to one's

wardrobe,

- reducing restaurant dining.

"The savings can be contributed to the needs of the poor among us," the statement suggests.

Among other challenges, the statement urges the church to "seek additional ways to work with the needy in our communities." It calls on the government to

- create an economic environment in which the basic needs of all people are protected and there are adequate opportunities to assume a productive role,
- support the work of charitable organizations that work with the poor,
- provide direct assistance to the most vulnerable members of society.

The MCC U.S. board adopted a similar statement in 1983. Its renewal this year came at the request of the MCC Washington Office.

"It's a bit lonely to speak without the backing of the board," said J. Daryl Byler, Washington Office director.

The board was willing to give that backing, with a few words of caution.

"We ought to somehow function above the level of partisan politics … and not become political in our interests," said Beachy Amish representative David Miller of Partridge, Kan.

'We ought to somehow function above the level of partisan politics.'

David Miller

Susan Goering, General Conference Mennonite Church representative from Baltimore, didn't see it as a partisan issue. "The Democrats are equally at fault as the Republicans," she said.

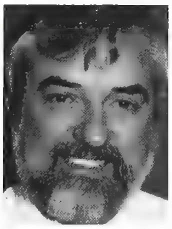
In other action, the board

- approved a 1995 budget of $4.2 million, a 5.8 percent increase over 1994,
- appointed Lynette Meck to a third three-year term as executive secretary,
- renewed for another three years a 1992 statement of "Commitments to Native Americans." This includes recruitment of Native Americans to service positions and involving Native Americans in its racism awareness education work. *Paul Schrag*

MCC Canada questions its ability to speak for constituents

Winnipeg (MCCC)—Can Mennonite Central Committee Canada claim to speak on behalf of Canadian Mennonites and Brethren in Christ church members when it addresses government? That was the question MCC Canada's executive committee struggled with during its Feb. 3-4 meeting in Ottawa.

Last November the MCC Canada board raised the issue when it recommended that staff consult broadly to hear various perspectives before issuing statements to government. At its Ottawa meeting the executive committee took time to ponder how that recommendation could be put into effect.



'Even conference leaders wouldn't presume to speak for their members anymore.' ***Frey***

MCC Canada executive director Marvin Frey notes that when the agency was created 32 years ago it was given permission to "act as a united voice" for Canadian Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches on "matters of national concern" such as peace witness, alternative service and immigration matters. "But things have changed a great deal since MCC Canada's constitution was written in 1963," he says. "It would be presumptuous of us to claim that we can unilaterally speak on their [the churches'] behalf today."

George Richert, chair of the executive committee, agrees. "There are very few issues we could get a united voice on," he says, noting that during the Gulf War MCC Canada spoke against Canada's involvement, but some Mennonites and Brethren in Christ supported Canadian participation in the war.

"We can achieve unanimity on things like feeding the hungry overseas and responding to disasters, but

Peacemaker Congress '95 will be held May 26-29 at the International Conference Center in Chicago. To plan events for children, conference planners have enlisted help from the Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center at Bluffton (Ohio) College. The conference theme is "50-Year Jubilee: Transforming Violence, Embracing Nonviolence." To register, contact Christian Peacemaker Teams, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680, (312) 455-1199.

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Ray and Betty Funk of Hillsboro, Kan., have given the contents of their hardware store to charity. The Funks, owners of Gambles store in downtown Hillsboro, closed shop Dec. 31, 1994, donating the remaining inventory to Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., their alma mater. Ray, whose father ran the store when Ray was growing up, has worked in the store for 57 years. The remaining inventory, valued at more than $37,000, will be sold at the Bethel College dispersal auction, scheduled for April 22.

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A group of Israelis and Palestinians marched through Hebron, West Bank, Feb. 24, to mark the one-year anniversary of the slaying of 29 Muslim worshipers by Israeli settler Baruch Goldstein in the Abraham Mosque in Hebron. Some 30 participants carried signs calling for the end of violence in Hebron and the departure of the Israeli settlers. A contingent of Israeli Defense Force officers greeted the group and arrested four participants. Kathleen Kern and Wendy Lehman, Christian Peacemaker Teams members there, participated in the demonstration.

A former Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) student was abducted by gunpoint March 6 from an area near the college's Warkentin Court and was raped. Her abductor remains at large. Bethel students organized a candlelight walk March 8, "Face the Night with Courage." "This evening ... shows Bethel College at its best," said Bethel president John E. Zehr. "Face the Night with Courage is a student-initiated effort to take courage from community and help students realize the strength they have when united." (*The Newton Kansan*)

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Budget shortfall was a major topic at the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's annual Council of Boards meetings Feb. 1-4. After virtually no change in giving since 1990, donations in 1994 fell by $164,000. Total giving to CMC represented only 86.1 percent of the goal and 91.2 percent of actual spending. The Finance Committee and General Board decided to challenge congregations by keeping the asking budget at the 1994 level of $1,997,000 for the next three years. But the General Board also decided to maintain the policy of avoiding deficit financing by setting allocations for the next three years at the level of 1994 actual receipts of $1,669,000, plus $25,000 in "new dollars" from associate member congregations.

• • •

In a letter last November to pastors and congregational chairs, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada encouraged its members to promote Christian family life in church and society. A copy of "Family, Singleness and Marriage," Article 19 of the new Confession of Faith, accompanied the letter, as did suggestions for study and action. Study suggestions included the issues of abortion, violence in media and child poverty. With the definition of family on the government agenda, congregations were called to voice their concerns by writing to their member of parliament, to the editor of the local newspaper and to other community groups.

when it comes to some of the more controversial issues such as war, Native land claims, immigration, crime and other social issues here at home, it would be very difficult to arrive at consensus."

Things were different in the 1960s, says Frey. "At that time conference leaders, who did claim to speak for their members, sat on MCC Canada's executive committee. But even conference leaders wouldn't presume to speak for their members anymore."

'We aren't going to achieve a unified voice anymore.'

Worth

Given this new reality, should MCC Canada keep trying to address government? For MCC Ontario executive director Dave Worth the answer is yes—but it should do it differently. "We aren't going to achieve a unified voice anymore," he says. "But maybe we can coordinate the way Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups approach government."

Worth thinks that MCC Canada's Ottawa office could help bring conferences together on an issue by issue basis. "With enough lead time, conferences could agree to make joint submissions to the government. The Ottawa office could provide advice on how to prepare it and who to address the submission to."

At the same time, Frey and Richert believe that there may be times when MCC Canada should address the government directly. "There are some issues which some conferences may feel they can't touch, like land claims, the social safety net or militarism," Frey says. "We could carry those forward to the government."

At the meeting Tom Yoder Neufeld of Conrad Grebel College reminded the executive committee that as a church agency, the first question facing MCC Canada is "not what we should say to government" but "what should we be as a church?" After finding answers to the latter question, "we then may have something to say to government."

The executive committee asked MCC Canada staff to prepare draft guidelines about how the agency should speak to government. "We welcome comments on the subject from Canadian Mennonite and Brethren in Christ church members," Frey says.

Bethel College board names new president

North Newton, Kan.—The Bethel College Board of Directors has elected Douglas A. Penner as the new president of Bethel College. The board chose Penner at meetings March 3 to succeed John E. Zehr, who will retire July 31.

Penner is executive director of the Associated Colleges of Central Kansas (ACCK), a consortium of six independent church-related liberal arts colleges based in McPherson, Kan. He will begin serving in the Bethel presidency on Aug. 1.

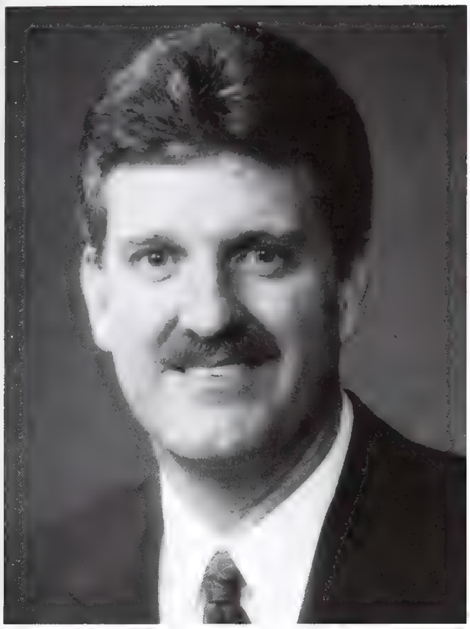
At a press conference March 3, Penner spoke about the college's future. He said he plans to "gear up" strategic planning and will bring a personal commitment to ensuring adequate teaching resources—equipment, facilities and staff—on campus.

When asked about the possibility of a major fund drive in the near future, Penner said, "A major step forward in terms of financial resources will be required." He said a careful planning process will have to precede concrete plans for such a drive.

Penner characterized the school's relationship to the General Conference Mennonite Church as one of interdependence. But, he said, that interdependence has not always been fully recognized. "The college has always been aware that it needed the church," he said, but "the college's role in supporting the churches has been less apparent."

Penner said that as church budgets fall, enrollment drops at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and the church experiences a shortage of pastors, the church becomes more aware of the two-way relationship. He cited the college's role in connecting students to the Mennonite heritage, saying, "That students reconnect to the church when they leave here is vital to [the church's] long-term survival."

Originally from Reedley, Calif., Penner graduated from Bethel College in 1969 with majors in psychology and sociology. He received his master's and doctoral degrees in social psychology from the University of Kansas. He served on the Bethel



Penner

faculty from 1972 to 1987 as professor of psychology.

From 1987 to 1991, Penner was an organizational consultant with Growth Associates of Prairie View in Newton. There he provided consultation services to organizations on management and administrative issues. Penner was named executive director of ACCK in 1991.

Penner's wife, Raylene Hinz-Penner, is associate professor of English at Bethel. Penner said Hinz-Penner would continue employment at the college in an administrative, primarily nonteaching role. The Penners are members of the Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton. *Larry Penner with a report from Bethel College News Service*

Saskatchewan Mennos boost budget

Saskatoon (GCMC)—Delegates to the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan Feb. 17-19 contributed $12,000 on the spot rather than see their conference budget drastically cut.

The conference had experienced a $63,500 operating deficit in 1994, on a budget of $458,700 with actual expenses at $463,768. In light of this reality, the executive proposed a 1995 budget of $389,335, which meant program cuts, including phasing out the Person-to-Person prison visitation program based in Prince Albert.

The Christian service committee asked for a few moments to challenge the assembly with what they called a "celebration of unity." They set the traditional symbols of service—basin, pitcher and towel—at the front of the auditorium and asked people to show their support for the conference by bringing forward pledges or cash. About $12,000 in cash and pledges was raised.

The executive also received a note from a constituent family that guaranteed the needed $26,000 to carry on the work of Person-to-Person's prison program for 1995. In light of the show of support, the executive presented a revised budget of $447,800. Delegates approved the revised budget.

Another issue that emerged was the hurt and upheaval at First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon, where Henry Reimer resigned last fall after the conference suspended his ministerial credentials. According to a Sept. 6, 1994, *Mennonite Reporter* article, the conference suspended his credentials for the following reasons: (1) breach of the code of ethics in regard to counseling, (2) inappropriate financial dealings with a client and (3) accusation of sexual impropriety.

The executive committee reported they took action as soon as they received written complaints last year. They expressed reluctance to discuss the case openly and indicated that litigation fees are being incurred.

Delegates approved a motion that the $185,000 being held at the Mennonite Foundation be used to cover the 1994 operating deficit of $63,500 and that the balance be retained as a reserve for a variety of purposes, including "unusual legal expenses anticipated in 1995."

Both Elim Bible Camp and Camp Shekinah requested permission to begin fund-raising campaigns to improve facilities. In both cases, permission was denied because the conference felt it was premature.

A motion from the floor instructed the executive to develop both a long-term and a short-term plan with goals and strategies to give some focus to the work of the conference in the next few years.

Otto Driedger of Regina was elected vice chair, and Janine Gunther of Carrot River secretary. Henry Harder continues as chair. *Based on a* Mennonite Reporter *report by Jake Nickel*

Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church celebrated its 100th anniversary Dec. 31, 1994. The celebration included choral singing, plays, the reenactment of a traditional worship service, and displays, including three scale models of the church buildings through the years. A candle lighting by representatives of 10 different age groups illustrated the cycle of life and God's presence in all generations. A midnight bell proclaimed the centennial of the founding of the church.

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The Mid-Kansas Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale will be held April 7-8 at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson, Kan. The sale will begin at 7 p.m. April 7. A Saturday morning breakfast will begin at 6, followed by auctions beginning at 8:45 a.m. The "House Against Hunger," 700 Normandy Road, Newton, Kan., will be sold through a realtor to benefit MCC. A cattle walk is scheduled to depart at 8:30 a.m. April 5 from Zion Mennonite Church in Elbing along a 52-mile course to the fairgrounds. At age 96, Jake Daum of McPherson, Kan., raised $10,050 in pledges last year for the walk. He is finding sponsors again this year. A golf tournament will be held April 29 in Hesston, Kan.

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Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C., has added three new programs to its curriculum, effective this September. The community support services major is intended to prepare people to work in supportive care facilities operated by Mennonite Central Committee and other agencies. MCC is funding start-up costs for the program. A new caregiving major will train undergraduates in "primary people-helping and counseling skills," preparing students for a seminary degree in counseling. An English as a second language program is designed for international students who need to upgrade their skills to be admitted to college or university.

A reunion for Pax men and women who served in Europe during 1950-56 will be held May 6-7 at Miracle Camp Grounds, Lawton, Mich. Hans Peter Cornelsen and his wife, Annamarie, and Imgard Kliewer Tielman and her husband, Alfred, will come from Bachnang, Germany, to attend. Contact Jim Yordy, 4612 Center Ave., Lyons, IL 60534, (708) 442-8130.

• • •

Israeli prisoner of conscience Mordechai Vanunu marked his 3,000th day in solitary confinement on Dec. 17, 1994. Vanunu is serving an 18-year sentence for espionage and treason. He was kidnapped from Rome and taken to Israel to be tried for revealing the existence of a secret nuclear weapons factory in the Negev Desert. Israel still denies it has a nuclear weapons program. (*Signs of the Times*)

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The Mennonite Central Committee anniversary speakers' bureau includes 44 people available to tell MCC stories in church services and at special events in 1995. Speakers include MCC administrators, long-time MCC workers, alumni and staff. Possible themes include MCC history, emergency response, service as transformation, the Self-Help program, conflict resolution and MCC programs in specific geographical regions. Speakers donate their time; groups that invite speakers cover transportation and hosting expenses. For more information, contact your nearest MCC office.

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The Young Adult Reference Council (of the General Conference Mennonite Church) and the Young Adult Network (of the Mennonite Church) will hold a joint meeting at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat Center in Ontario May 11-13. They will look at what makes congregations attractive to young adults and will discuss leadership training. For more information contact Ken Hawkley at (316) 283-5100.

Alberta Mennos move to buy land for camp

Didsbury, Alta. (GCMC)—Delegates at the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta (CMA) Feb. 24-25 voted to make a $250,000 offer on land neighboring a conference-owned camp.

Initial discussion of the possible purchase of 112 acres immediately to the north of Camp Valaqua focused on the expense during cash-strapped times. But the tone turned with questions from Marilyn Wiebe, Didsbury: "What will happen to the land if we don't purchase it? Will development encroach on our use of our land?"

Jan Wilhelm, Edmonton, moved that the conference make a $250,000 offer to purchase with funds to come from a combination of cash and loans.

Donita Wiebe-Neufeld, conference youth minister, noted that the youth were behind this move and were prepared to help by donating $2,000. Delegates also noted that logging larger spruce on the property and on current camp land could provide some income.

Under the leadership of Ted Rempel, outgoing conference chair, delegates made several other decisions. They

- rejected a proposal to provide student loans at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute;
- voted in a new job description for the position of youth minister (formerly youth worker);
- approved a plan to "twin" CMA congregations, pairing them for mutual support;
- welcomed into the conference Faith Mennonite Church in Calgary, an English-language Chinese congregation with 19 members and Andrew Chan as pastor;
- approved a 1995 budget increase of $10,000;
- elected Paul Paetkau from First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, as the new chair.

Student loans: The student loan recommendation generated debate. Alberta students attending the Bible institute are ineligible for Canada student loans. The recommendation would have enabled students to apply for a loan, administered through the school, from funds donated or made available through Mennonite Foundation of Canada with the conference as guarantor.

Delegates viewed this move as too risky and better carried out by the student's home congregation. However, delegates resolved to lobby the Alberta government to extend loans to students attending the school.

Several parents affirmed the move to change the position of conference youth worker to youth minister with a new job description. "What better way to tailor our goals" said Ted Rempel, "than to shape expectations through the definition of this work as ministry."

After a ballot vote, strong support carried the recommendation as well as one to organize a commissioning service for Wiebe-Neufeld for her remaining term of service.

Church donations were down by $3,000, but the conference ended the year with a surplus of $22,800 due in part to underspending by $10,500. Delegates approved a $10,000 increase in the 1995 budget, but not without debate on the method of assessing congregational contributions.

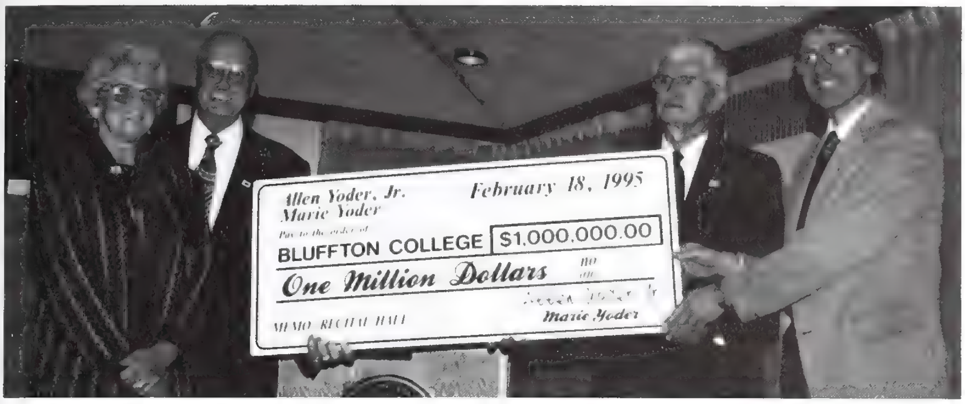
The use of a tiered method (assessing smaller congregations at a lower fee-per-member), while supported in principle, was also questioned since three of the seven largest churches were assessed at $20 to $35 more per member than the other four in the past year.

The assessment, which serves as a guide to congregations for their conference giving, was accepted for 1995 since many churches had already set their budgets based on these figures. Delegates agreed that in 1996 the seven largest churches again be assessed at an equal rate. *Based on a report from* Mennonite Reporter

Bluffton College kicks off major capital campaign

Bluffton, Ohio—Bluffton College kicked off a major capital campaign with a $1 million check from the campaign's chair, Bluffton trustee Allen Yoder Jr.

The campaign, "Bluffton College, the Second Century, Painting a Picture for Life," has a goal of $15.2 million for its first phase. That sum includes $10



Big check: *Allen and Marie Yoder, left, present a check for $1 million to Bluffton College to kick off the Second Century Campaign. Accepting the check are Dr. Elmer Neufeld, president of the college (inside right), and Doug Reichenbach, Bluffton College trustee (far right).*

million for a new recital hall, academic center and central campus improvements; $3.7 million for unrestricted funds, financial aid and ongoing operations; and $1.5 million to increase endowment.

"We are seeking special five-year commitments from alumni and friends of Bluffton College in order to prepare the college for the new level of service we will need to deliver as we prepare to enter our second century," said Yoder, past president and CEO of Jayco Inc. of Middlebury, Ind.

Yoder's $1 million check, the largest single cash contribution in the college's history, will be used toward construction of a 300-seat, $1.7 million recital hall connected to the current music building, Mosiman Hall. Construction is set to begin this spring, with completion expected by summer 1996. To accommodate the hall and other improvements, West College Avenue, which now runs through the Bluffton campus, will be permanently closed.

The proposed three-story academic center would provide classroom space featuring improved classroom technology, a centralized media center and larger lecture halls. It will house the departments of humanities, social sciences, economics/business, education and mathematics. *Based on a report from Bluffton College*

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European Anabaptist Heritage	July 5 - 21	John Ruth & Ruth Jantzi
European PAX	July 10 - 26	Cal Redekop & Henry D. Landes
England/Scotland	August 9 - 24	Wilmer Martin & Mary Rittenhouse Schwartrzentruber
Mexico	November 15 - 30	Cal Redekop

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Mennonite Central Committee invites its supporting churches to set aside Sept. 24 to celebrate MCC's 75th anniversary. An MCC Sunday packet, *Celebrate, Reflect, Recommit,* containing a litany, a children's story and sermon suggestions, will be sent to congregations this spring. For more information on organizing an MCC Sunday, contact your nearest MCC office.

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Like their Hollywood colleagues, most of the directors competing this year at The Berlin International Film Festival focused on murder sprees. But unlike U.S. hits such as "Pulp Fiction," most of the murders in the European films occurred off-screen, reflecting those directors' concerns about the impact of violence on viewers. (*Christian Science Monitor*)

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Campaigns for peace tax legislation are under way in at least 11 countries and the European Parliament. The newsletter of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund reports on progress in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States. Peace tax legislation would allow conscientious objectors to designate their tax money for nonmilitary use. For more information contact NCPTF, 2121 Decatur Place NW, Washington, DC 20008.

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Canada's Commissioner of Corrections, John Edwards, has spoken in favor of alternatives to incarceration. He oversees Canada's federal penitentiaries. "Many of the people in jail today are not violent," he says. For them, "going to jail may exacerbate the problem—do more harm than good." He believes alternatives such as the Mennonite Central Committee-supported Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program can play a useful role in the justice system. "Community and family support are key to rehabilitation," he says.

Record

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MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
CMBC—Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg

In a period when the U.S. military is cutting personnel (from 2.1 million to 1.6 million), it is doubling the number of high school ROTC units, testing 30 new "career academies" in selected high schools and funding 10 experimental "boot camps" for underachieving students. When ROTC expansion is completed in 1997, the number of high school units will rise from 1,500 to 3,000. (*Newton Area Peace Center Newsletter*)

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Recent reports by the U.S. Government Accounting Office say chemical weapons are buried in 215 sites in 33 states and that it will take $16.6 million and 40 years to clean up the sites, according to *National Catholic Reporter*. The GAO reports were released last December. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

MINISTERS

John Miller will begin as pastor at First Church, San Francisco, in April.

Jake Neufeld is retiring as pastor at Whitewater Church, Boissevain, Man.

Doug Reichenbach has resigned as pastor at Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., effective in June.

Robin Walton, Neil Avenue Church, Columbus, Ohio, was licensed Jan. 29 as a chaplain at Doctor's Hospital.

WORKERS

Lora Braun, Grace Church, Winkler, Man., most recently of Winnipeg, began a seven-month assignment in Zambia, Canada and the United States as a Youth Discovery Team member with MCC.

Peter Fast was granted professor emeritus by CMBC in February.

Rachel Roth, Akron (Pa.) Church, most recently of Goshen, Ind., began a seven-month assignment in Zambia, Canada and the United States as a Youth Discovery Team member with MCC.

David Schroeder was granted professor emeritus by CMBC in February.

Rebecca Seiling, Bethel Church, Elora, Ont., began a seven-month assignment in India, the United States and Canada as a Youth Discovery Team member with MCC.

Jonathan Tieszen, Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kan., most recently of Sikalongo, Zambia, is continuing a four-year MCC term in Zambia with a special seven-month assignment as a Youth Discovery Team leader.

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Asia Resource Box

The *Asia Resource Box* equips VHS teachers with powerful lessons about peace. Tells how war disrupted life in Laos, how people continue to die and how children can work for peace by raising funds for MCC's Laos bombie removal project.

Includes *Letter from Laos/Taste of Thailand* videos, a 4-day curriculum with bulletin board ideas and show-and-tell items. Contact an MCC office for free loan.

Your VBS contributions are needed for this million dollar project.

Mennonite Central Committee

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Mennonite Central Committee Canada
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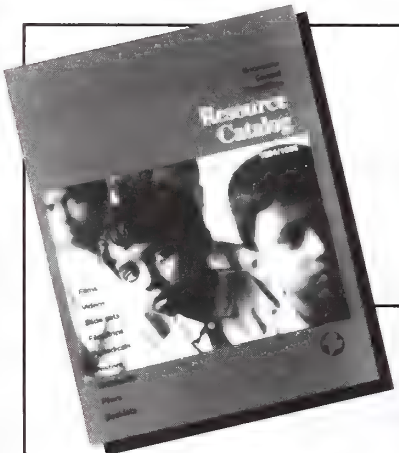
(204) 261-6381



Do you need resources?

Try Mennonite Central Committee's 1994-95 Resource Catalog.

Lists free-loan audiovisuals and printed materials about the mission of MCC, the environment, lifestyle, peace and justice issues, hunger and other topics. Includes a children's section.

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Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381; fax (204) 269-9875

Eastern Mennonite University has a **faculty position in business**: Full-time teaching position beginning fall 1995. Ph.D. in business or economics and prior work experience are desirable. Responsible to teach courses in business administration and economics. Minorities are urged to apply.

Send letter of application and résumé **by May 1** to **Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**.

Need harvest help mid-May through August or November.

Contact **Lance Martens Custom Harvesting, (316) 463-2426** (leave message).

Health-care management in a retirement community/long-term-care setting. 102 apartments, 88-bed skilled nursing home, 32-bed residential-care home and 16 MR/DD group-home beds. Responsibilities will include management of the business office, subsidized apartments for the elderly and home health care. Qualifications should include business orientation, Christian commitment and an entrepreneurial spirit. Equal opportunity employer.

Send résumé with cover letter stating salary requirement to **Administrator, Beth Haven Nursing Home, 2500 Pleasant St., Hannibal, MO 63401-2699**.

Goshen College seeks applicants for the position of **admissions counselor**, to begin July 1. This assignment is for one year. Responsibilities include representing the college among prospective students and their parents and communicating with prospective students. Qualifications include a commitment to Goshen College's mission, writing and speaking skills, willingness to travel, a bachelor's degree, and, preferably, related experience. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and résumé, including three references, to **Marty Lehman, Director of Admissions, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. Application deadline: **April 14** or until position is filled.

Qualified, Christian **secondary education teachers** needed in **Kathmandu, Nepal**, school for missionary and other expatriate children, aged 11-16. Teachers needed most urgently in English, drama, history, music, French and German. Openings beginning **August 1995**. Modest salary provided for up to two years.

For more details contact **Mark or Darlene Keller, 1057 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801, (703) 434-4535.**

Goshen College seeks faculty for a half-time, one-year position in **art appreciation and history** for the 1995-96 academic year.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Screening and applications will begin March 1 and continue until the position is filled.

Applicants should send letter of application, three letters of recommendation, one sheet of slides or art history research information, complete undergraduate and graduate transcripts, and SASE to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. If you have further questions, call **John Nyce at (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**.

Goshen College has openings for a **male residence hall director** and a **female residence hall director**. Each director is responsible for the administration of a residence-hall complex housing about 200 students. Responsibilities include representing the Student Development Division in the hall and presenting student needs and concerns to the administration. The director also counsels students, enforces policies and standards, handles discipline and educational programming and selects, trains and supervises student staff. Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred. People from under-represented groups encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application and résumé, including three references, to **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. Applications accepted until position is filled.

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Willard Swartley would have been a salesman, he says, if the Lord had not intervened. Instead, Willard has devoted his life to growing in knowledge of God's word, and helping others do this, too. He is a writer and editor in addition to teaching at AMBS since 1978.

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Reviews

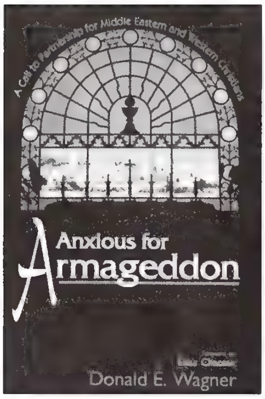
BOOKS

THE MIDEAST AND GOD'S WILL

Anxious for Armageddon: A Call to Partnership for Middle Eastern and Western Christians *by Donald E. Wagner (Herald Press, 1995, 253 pages)*

Reviewed by H.A. Penner, Akron, Pa.

Anxious for Armageddon is an engaging and readable resource for all interested in the Middle East. Serious scholars, compassionate individuals and those contemplating sensitive travel to the "holy land" will find this book helpful.


A Call to Partnership for Middle Eastern and Western Christians
Anxious for Armageddon
Donald E. Wagner

Regarded by its author as a "personal journey as a Christian into these issues," *Anxious for Armageddon* is particularly useful for Christians who seek a biblically-based understanding of the issues that foster strife in the Middle East and who seek the elimination of hatred and warfare.

Donald Wagner's experiences living and working in the Middle East and his broad contacts with the indigenous Christian community there give authenticity to this timely book.

In *Anxious for Armageddon*, Wagner tells of his early adoption of a dispensationalist worldview that treated Israel's possession of the "holy land" as fulfillment of a divine plan that would result in the apocalyptic battle of Armageddon. Later he came to the understanding that faithful Christian responses to the current situation in the Middle East must include just treatment of Palestinians.

Subtitled "A Call to Partnership for Middle Eastern and Western Christians," *Anxious for Armageddon* urges Christians throughout the world to recognize that Middle Eastern Christians have a historic presence in the region. Middle Eastern Christians seek international dialogue and solidarity. They seek the sharing of mutual gifts so that all peoples of the region can experience peace and security.

This book will energize a Christian's desire to help spread peace rather than support those who seem "anxious for Armageddon."

EVANGELIZING THE WEST

A Word in Season: Perspectives on Christian World Missions *by Lesslie Newbigin (Eerdmans, 1994, 208 pages)*

Reviewed by Wilbert R. Shenk, Elkhart, Ind.

Anything from the mind of Lesslie Newbigin is sure to stimulate and challenge. This collection of 17 essays, which span the period 1960-1993, is no exception. At least half are from the period since 1985. Several of these pieces are here published for the first time, including two that were given as addresses in 1960: "The Pattern of the Christian World Mission" and "Missions and the Work of the Holy Spirit."

Newbigin has consistently emphasized the importance of the work of the Spirit in the life of the church. In contrast to many of his contemporaries, who dismissed the prophetic critique of Roland Allen, Newbigin sought to apply insights from Allen. Newbigin reports how this helped his work with poor rural congregations in India.

For the past 15 years Newbigin has been involved in efforts to renew the church in modern Western culture. At an ecumenical conference in 1973 where the future of world mission was being debated, the Indonesian church leader T.B. Simatupang in an exasperated aside remarked to Newbigin, "Of course the number one question is, Can the West be converted?"

This question began to burn in Newbigin's mind after he returned to Great Britain from India in 1974 and observed the condition of the churches in his homeland. A number of the essays included here address this theme. Especially useful are "The Cultural Captivity of Western Christianity as a Challenge to a Missionary Church" and "Our Missionary Responsibility in the Crisis of Western Culture."

The cross-cultural mission is of enduring validity. But as Newbigin makes clear, the renewal, and therefore the future of the church in modern Western culture, is dependent on the recovery of its missionary vocation to its own culture. This is an urgently needed word.

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FOR SPOUSES OF THE ABUSED

Your Wife Was Sexually Abused *by John Courtright and Dr. Sid Rogers (Zondervan, 1994, 158 pages)*

Reviewed by Ken Graber, Fair Oaks, Calif.

Studies suggest that one in four marriages has been or will be affected by the issues discussed in this book. Courtright and Rogers provide helpful guidelines for any husband who finds that his wife's crisis has become his crisis and so has become a threat to the relationship.

The advice is based on the personal experience of the authors, supplemented by information gathered from seminars conducted by the authors for men affected by their wives' memories of sexual abuse. The real-life stories illustrate typical issues and provide relevant information.

Each chapter deals with one topic in a concise, easy-to-read format. The topics are presented in three logical groups, the first of which covers typical reactions and techniques for getting in touch with the feelings that will inevitably surface. The middle section explains the sexual abuse recovery process and what a man must understand to help sustain the marriage relationship through the crisis. The last section suggests practical prin-ciples for husbands who want to support their wives' recovery.

Questions for thought and discussion are listed at the end of each chapter. Just as therapy is an important factor in the recovery process, discussion groups or personal counseling is important for men.

Courtright and Rogers believe that men need both supportive friends and skilled friends. A supportive friend is someone who will listen but may not have relevant experience or expertise. A skilled friend is a trained counselor, minister, or someone who has a successful relationship in which sexual abuse issues have been confronted and resolved.

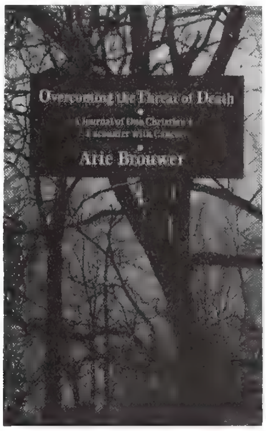
The appendix provides additional information answering common questions. Although men's issues are mentioned earlier, it is only in the appendix that the authors say that many men also need therapy to deal with dysfunctional behavior issues. Biblical references provide a Christian perspective and make this book an important resource for Christian marriage counseling. A bibliography and resource list would have been welcome additions for men who need more in-depth information or access to additional services.

FAITH IN THE FACE OF DEATH

Overcoming the Threat of Death *by Arie Brouwer (Eerdmans, 1994, 83 pages)*

Reviewed by Henry D. Weaver, Santa Barbara, Calif.

Does God *make* illness happen? Does God *let* illness happen? Can you have hope when you know you are terminally ill? These are some of the questions addressed by Arie Brouwer.



In December 1992, Brouwer, a pastor of a church in New Jersey and a former church executive, was diagnosed with cancer of the colon that had spread to the liver. To help communicate with interested friends and members of his church he began to record "reflections" about his illness and his reactions to it. In the 10 reflections that make up this book he brings the insights of a keen mind, a theological training and a strong faith to his daily involvement with his illness, the medical community and those who loved him. This is a book about faith, hope and love.

After introducing his situation he struggles with the why question. One insight is, "I can be very angry about [my illness] without being angry with God. In fact, I can trust that God is no less angry than I, perhaps more angry." In spite of his expectation of death he finds hope. "The struggle is not to defeat the cancer; it is to gain the victory, to inherit life in all its fullness. … That is the meaning of 'overcome,' not merely to lay waste the enemy but to enter into a wholly new relationship of well-being."

Those of us who hear the diagnosis of cancer react in many different ways. For a Christian friend who has received that news, I would recommend this book ahead of any others I know.

Resources

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- **Through New Eyes** is a 23-minute video focusing on 75 years of Mennonite Central Committee. Available for purchase ($20 U.S./$25 Cdn.) or free loan from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381; or from your nearest MCC office.
- **MCC Anniversary Photo Essay** is a 24-page photographic timeline of MCC's history. Available from any MCC office.
- **Little Stories for Little Children** by Donna McKee Rhodes (Herald Press, 1995, $7.95 U.S./$11.35 Cdn.) is a collection of 52 worship stories for use by pastors, worship leaders, Sunday school teachers, camp counselors and others.
- **Simon Peter** by Eleanor Snyder is the newest addition to the Living Stones collection of resources for vacation Bible school and summer Sunday school. Order from Faith & Life Press, (800) 743-2484; $29.95 U.S./ $38.95 Cdn.
- **God So Loves the City: Seeking a Theology for Urban Mission**, edited by Charles Van Engen and Jude Tiersma (MARC Publications, 1994, $21.95 U.S.), uses stories collected from an international team of urban church workers to explore the urgent issues facing those who minister in today's cities.
- **The Principle of Mercy: Taking the Crucified People from the Cross** by Jon Sobrino (Orbis Books, 1994, $16.95) reflects on the principles of mercy and solidarity as the mode of Christian witness and discipleship in a world of conflict and suffering.
- **Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle** by Neil Elliott (Orbis Books, 1994, $18.95 U.S.) refutes the portrayal of Paul as a symbol "of the prevailing order and reinstates him as the agitator and martyr that he really was" (Walter Wink).
- **New Life to the Earth** (American Bible Society, 1994) approaches environmental concerns from a scriptural view. To order contact ABS News Bureau at (212) 408-1325.

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Editorial

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem

Jerusalem has been at the center of religious faith as well as religious conflict for centuries. The psalmist's admonition to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6) has taken on new meaning for me. Having visited that holy city in late February, I now want to follow that call to pray for peace inside—and outside—its walls.

As I walked around the Old City in Jerusalem, I felt in awe of being in the city Jesus visited each year at Passover. I was there during Ramadan, Islam's month of fasting, and in spite of the checkpoints around the city to keep many people out, the streets were crowded with people either going to worship or attending to their daily business.

Biblical scholar Joachim Jeremias writes that in the first century the population of Jerusalem during Passover would have likely swelled to a million people. On those visits to the Holy City, Jesus would have encountered Roman soldiers patroling the streets.

Today the occupying force in the Holy Land is not Rome but Israel. Instead of Jews going to prayers under the watchful eye of Roman soldiers, Palestinians go to their prayers under the eyes of Israeli soldiers. One night I saw a crowd of Muslims celebrate in the presence of Israeli soldiers, then scatter after someone threw a bottle and the soldiers waved their guns at the crowd. I can more easily imagine the tension created by the crowds listening to a bold man from up north in Galilee. His words, his fearlessness, his call to follow a different king, were threatening to the Roman occupiers.

We must pray that people will be free to go to Jerusalem and pray without fear.

It is ironic that Jews, who have been oppressed through the centuries, largely by so-called Christians, are now oppressing others. A number of the Jews I talked with said that because Jews have been killed in other countries, they need their own country in order to be safe. Their practice of closure, of keeping people in the West Bank from going into Jerusalem or into Israel, is "for security."

This is an old argument, one the United States has used for decades to defend its huge stockpile of nuclear weapons. In the name of security, all kinds of evil have been done. The call for security is a mask for fear. And fear, as Thomas Merton wrote in his *New Seeds for Contemplation*, is "the root of war." Fear creates enemies and leads to violence against innocent people.

With what do we cast out fear? Love. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18). Jesus came to Jerusalem and fearlessly called on people to love, even to love their enemies. The authorities feared Jesus and had him put to death.

Pray without fear: Many Palestinians face the threat of poverty, sickness, even death. Yet they persevere. Some of them lash out violently against their oppressors. But many others do not. We must pray for these people, pray for their liberation. We must pray for Jerusalem, that people will be free to go there and pray without fear.

Mennonites have a presence in the Holy Land through Mennonite Central Committee. While many Christian groups operate there, MCC has been there longer than most, over 40 years. Their approach has been one not of dominating others but of helping people there become more self-sufficient.

In a land of such intense polarities, it is not easy to support some people without being against others. Nevertheless, MCC has worked with groups to encourage dialogue between Jews and Palestinians. It is a slow, often discouraging process. Yet there are occasional signs of hope.

Another connection we in the United States have to the Holy Land is through the taxes we pay. The U.S. government sends billions of dollars each year to Israel, much of it for the military. Without U.S. aid, Israel would have a difficult time maintaining its occupation of the West Bank. U.S. leaders have little chance to hear about the effects of this aid on the Palestinian people.

"Hope is the thing with feathers," wrote Emily Dickinson, and it seems fleeting in the Holy Land. The place drives you to prayer because little else seems to do much good. Whatever else we try—supporting MCC work or writing letters to our government officials—let us at least pray for the peace of Jerusalem. *Gordon Houser*

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ

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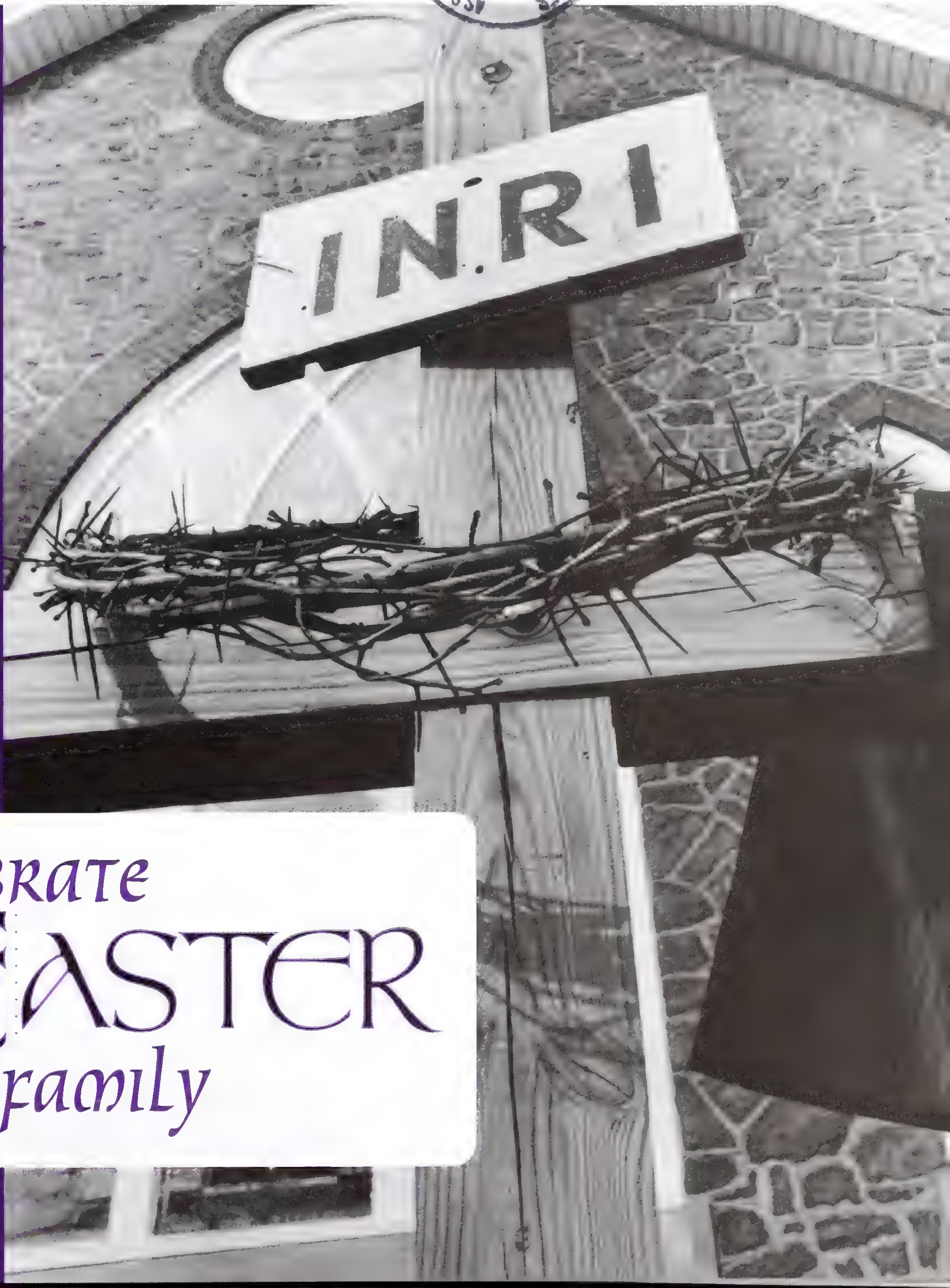

Celebrate Easter as a family

Prologue

Family traditions have not developed as strongly around celebrating Easter as they have around celebrating Christmas. In this issue (see pages 3-7), Anne Neufeld Rupp offers some helpful ways for families as well as individuals to celebrate Holy Week and remember Christ's death and resurrection. You may want to use these readings and keep them for use in future years.

Three poets—Menno Wiebe, Marilyn Black Phemister and J.O. Schrag—use words to help us feel the truth of God's power in overcoming death through Jesus Christ.

Our General Conference Mennonite Church moderator, Darrell Fast, reflects on the trip he and Loretta, his wife, took last fall to 14 urban congregations (see page 10). From this he presents a vision for healing and hope.

Mennonite pastor Mitchell Brown calls on Christians to observe with Jews "Yom ha Shoah," a day (April 27) in memory of the Holocaust (see page 11). Read his argument and tell us what you think.

Our news section includes reports of the annual meeting of the commissions and boards whose task is to represent your concerns and help the General Conference staff serve congregations better. Are they representing your concerns?

Finally, our overseas subscription fund, which helps Mennonites overseas receive *The Mennonite* when they cannot afford it, is nearly depleted. Contributions are welcome. Thank you in advance. *gh*

Next issue: What do our youth think?

Cover: Photo by Marilyn Nolt/Photo Agora

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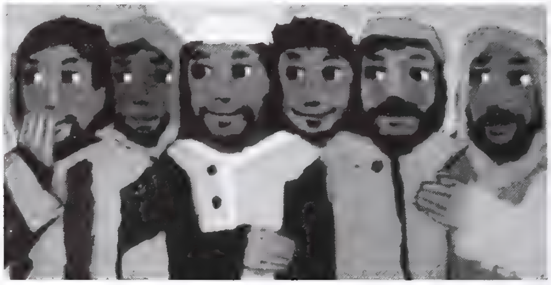

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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Passover, Good Friday and Easter

Anne Neufeld Rupp

Here are ways for you and your family to celebrate Holy Week and remember Christ's death and resurrection.

We teach our children to appreciate the Jewish heritage as well as our Christian heritage when we draw attention to the fact that Jesus' last days in Jerusalem took place during an important Jewish celebration, the Passover. During the Passover festival the Jews celebrated their salvation history, God's redemptive act whereby he led them out of slavery many centuries ago. A lamb had been killed in Egypt, its blood smeared on the doorposts of Hebrew homes, and the Angel of Death passed over. Egyptian homes, however, including Pharaoh's household, had been stricken by a deathly plague. Their firstborn sons died. The Egyptian prince died. Finally, out of desperation, the ruler of Egypt freed the Hebrew slaves, urging them to leave and serve their Lord. Thus, for the Jewish community the Passover was (and is) a time for remembering God's gracious deeds throughout history and God's continuing work among his people.

Jews who lived far from Palestine tried to travel to Jerusalem for the Passover at least once in their lifetime. Devoted Palestinian Jews (Jesus' parents among them) made this trip every year. At age 12 Jesus was allowed to go with his parents. We don't know how often Jesus made this annual pilgrimage after that, but we do know that during Jesus' last days he was in Jerusalem, and he ate the Passover meal, called the "seder," with his disciples.

The Passover connects the Christian faith with Good Friday and Easter. Good Friday becomes the night of the Passover Lamb, who gives his life for his people. Easter becomes the day of redemption and new life in the resur-

Are there times of injustice in today's world, at work, in school, on the playground, in the family, even in church, where we should speak out?

rected Lord. Thus the exodus from Egypt is symbolic of the salvation history we have in Jesus Christ.

Understanding the meaning of the Passover, Passion and Easter is difficult for adults, but even more so for children. You and your family may want to plan daily readings from Palm Sunday to Easter and during these times focus on the broader meaning of God's great works among us, not only in past history but also today. In doing so, the Christian Passover becomes not only an annual event where bunnies and bonnets appear, but a life lived 365 days a year under the rule of an almighty Creator, Savior Lord and God.

The following are simple litanies or poems with accompanying questions and/or activities for your family to use during the week before Easter.

Palm Sunday: (L=Leader; A=All)

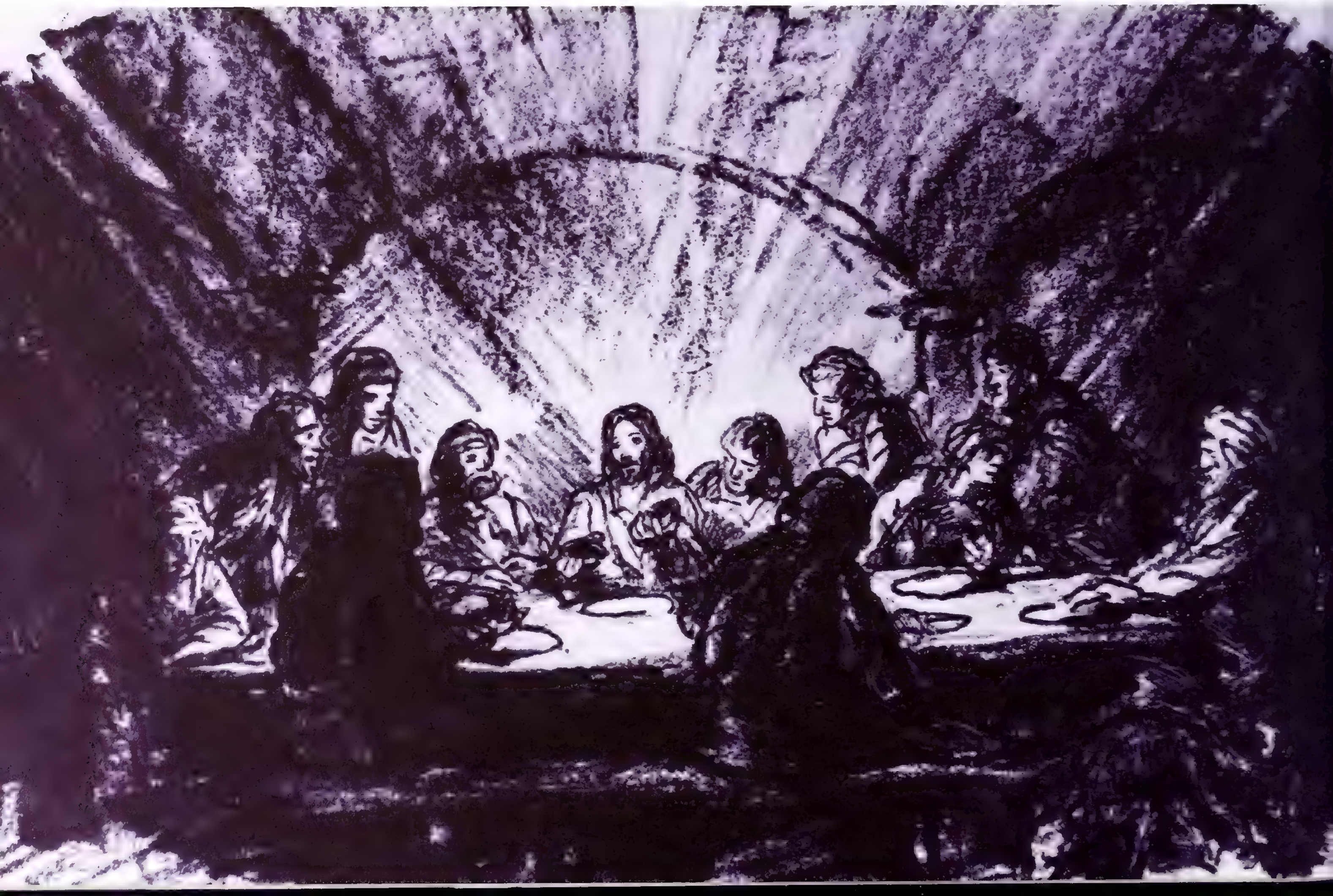
L: God, you created the world;
All that lives and moves you made.
Creator God, King of the universe,
Lord over all, you sent your Son.
A: On this special day, we praise you.
L: God, you called a people
And gave them your promises.
Savior God, King of the universe,
Lord over all, you sent your Son.
A: On this special day, we praise you.
L: On this Hosanna day, not far from Easter,
We praise you, hallelujah!
We thank you, hallelujah!
Redeemer God, King of the universe,
Lord over all,
You gave your Son.
A: (Recite John 3:16)
L: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
We wave our palms and praise you!
A: Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

To do: Buy palm fronds for each family member or make simple fronds from green crepe paper tied onto dowels or short twigs. During the last response, wave your palm branches.

Monday: (A paraphrase of Exodus 15)

I will shout to the Lord who has done a wonderful thing;
Jehovah is my strength and my psalm,
This makes my heart tremble and sing.
The ancestral God brought us through the treacherous seas,

The Passover connects the Christian faith with Good Friday and Easter. *"The Last Supper" by Jules Chadel (1870-1942), a French artist*



You and your family may want to plan daily readings from Palm Sunday to Easter and during these times focus on the broader meaning of God's great works among us, not only in past history but also today.

And led through the desert with wonders and glorious deeds.
All praise to our God for unchanging love and salvation,
Who rules over Israel, the people of promise, his nation.

To talk about: Talk about how God has led you and your family. Identify the many wonderful ways in which you have experienced God at work in your family's life.

Tuesday: (A paraphrase of the hymn, "Give of Your Best"):

Give of your best to the Master,
Give the best of your youth.
Put energy, joy and strength to the task
Of sharing God's love and truth.
Give of the best to your Master,
Let God be first in your heart.
Let God be first in your service
And never hold back any part.
Jesus has set the example,
Unflinching, courageous and brave,
Follow this Jesus who leads you
And give the best that you have.

Prayer time: What is your best? Discuss the positive ways in which you and your family may serve God. Ask individual family members to identify their "best" and then to participate in the following prayer. "God, I give my best to you. It is … "

Wednesday: (L=Leader; A=All)

L: We praise you, God,
For the wonderful things you have done;
For the skies, the silvered seas
And the warming sun
We praise you, God,
For laughter, love and living.
May our thanks be expressed to you
By our caring and giving.
A: So be it Lord!
Alleluia! Amen.

Plan together: Think about one way your family can care about someone in your community less fortunate than yourselves. Do it.

Thursday: Read Luke 22:63-64.

This Galilean a Son of God?
Look how they treat him!
I see a small man with a stick
Hitting him,
Again and then again.
Why doesn't he hit back?
Why won't he crack that little twig into
A thousand pieces,
Throw it high into the sky
Until the world looks like a star-filled day?
Then they'd believe.

For discussion: You are there. Wear the poet's shoes and attend Jesus' trial. What would you say differently? How would you end the poem?

Friday: Read Luke 23:4 (appoint readers as Pilate, One, Two, Three, Four).

One: This man is a revolution,
He's been trouble right from the start.
He's destroying our godly nation
And tearing us all apart.
Pilate: I do not find this man guilty!
Two: This man is a revolution,
Can't you see what he's doing to you?
He says we shouldn't pay taxes,
We shouldn't give Caesar his due.
Pilate: He does not deserve death.
Three: This man is a revolution,
He says he's the king of us all.
He's sure to take over your kingdom;
Your throne will tumble and fall.
Pilate: I will whip him and release him.
Four: This man is a revolution
Who stirs up the crowds all day.
He teaches the strangest teachings
and leads our people astray.
Pilate: What evil has he done?
All: Crucify him! Crucify him!

To make: Cut or tear pictures from magazines showing people who are being abused, slandered or mistreated. Make a collage (place a large sheet of paper on the table and allow all members to glue their pictures onto the paper). What does this have to do with Good Friday?

Saturday: Look up Matthew 27:27-54 in your family Bible. Assign parts to family members and read this story in drama form.

To do: With marking pens or crayons, ask each family member to draw a picture of the scene as they understand it. Then ask them to draw themselves in the scene. Where would they be? What would they be doing? Share your drawings. Talk about what it would have been like to be there. What would you have done? What would you have said? Are there times of injustice in today's world, at work, in school, on the playground, in the family, even in church, where we should speak out? What would we like to say?

Easter Sunday

For a family Easter: Make or buy sweet rolls or bread for Easter breakfast. After eating, read the following and thank Jesus for Easter.

Leader: Jesus said, "I am the bread of life."
He came many years ago to show us what this means;
To let us know we can do nothing without him.
Family: Christ is risen! Happy Easter!
Leader: Jesus said, "I am the bread of life."
He gave his life for us,
He rose that we may live again.
Family: Christ is risen! Happy Easter!
Leader: No one can live without bread or food.
No one can live without Jesus.
He gives us real life.
Family: Jesus is our bread of life.
Happy Easter! Hallelujah!

Anne Neufeld Rupp lives in Olathe, Kan.

Ways for families to reflect on Passion Week

How your family can think about the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection

Anne Neufeld Rupp

The week before Easter, known as Passion Week, is a time when some families read the Gospel stories about Jesus' last days in Jerusalem, beginning with Palm Sunday and ending with Easter. Some families take part in special services their church holds throughout the week. Some families participate in Good Friday services or enjoy Easter morning sunrise services. These are all helpful ways of recalling the journey from the gates of Jerusalem to the empty tomb. At times, however, the readings may seem too familiar, or most of the worship experiences take place outside the home. Perhaps your family needs some additional tools to help you reflect and meditate once again on the meaning of the Passion.

I suggest that your family take time to emphasize four particular events of Passion Week. Family schedules are unpredictable, particularly once you have teens in the home, and that's why you'll need to adapt these according to your lifestyle and the age of your children.

If your family gathers for regular devotions morning or evening, you might incorporate some of these ideas or use them in some other way. You could choose one of the suggested activities for that day, or if you have time, different individuals may want to choose several. For example, your family may choose to use only the prayer as an after-meal prayer on those four particular days. Or you may choose to use only the symbol. It could be a centerpiece for your dining table on these particular evenings. Just having it there may give opportunity for questions, discussion or some quiet thought.

If family members come home at different times, you may want to set up an eye-catching display in a suitable place and suggest that when they come home, or before they leave, they choose to think about the symbol you have displayed or reflect on one of the other suggestions. If you print each of them on a sheet of paper, laid out separately, they will be more eye-catching. You could even use different colors of paper, or if children are younger, paint a visual symbol on the paper.

Five types of suggestions follow for each of the four days. Select and choose in ways most helpful to your family.

1. Place a symbol

Palm Sunday: A palm branch

Maundy Thursday: A chalice

Good Friday: A cross

Easter: A pot with a young plant or grain (These would need to be planted several weeks in advance.)

2. Read a thought

Palm Sunday: They called him King for a day. Popularity is short-lived.

Maundy Thursday: He was saying good-bye to his friends. Leaving friends is not easy.

Good Friday: When the hard time came, few friends were left. It's good to have friends who stick with you, no matter what.

Easter: They could hardly believe the good news. Sometimes it's hard to believe good things, when you're expecting the worst.

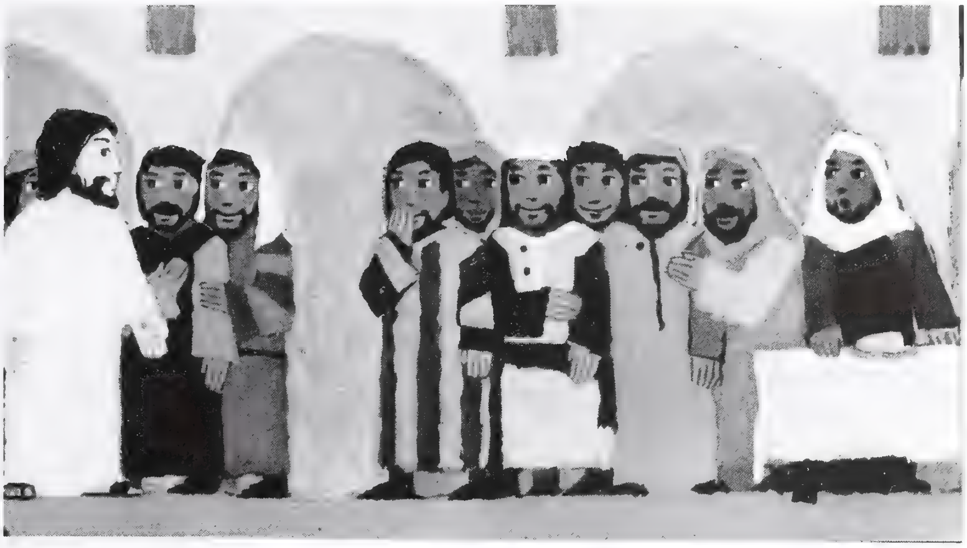
3. Share a story

Palm Sunday: We all have our times where we feel on top of the world. Everybody likes us, it seems. In school, at work, and at home, everything is going great. Think about a time like this. What was it like? How did you feel? Share this story with your family.

Maundy Thursday: Have you ever moved? Or has a friend moved away? Or did the family pet die or run away? Losing something makes us sad. We wish things would not be this way. Think about a time like this. What was it like? How did you feel? Share this story with your family.

Good Friday: Nobody has an "all-smooth" life. Sometimes everything goes wrong. Good friends turn their backs on us. The teacher criticizes. Or we just can't get that algebra. Maybe we lose a job or worry about a big bill. Or someone is sick for a long time. Sometimes it's hard to talk about

Family schedules are unpredictable, particularly once you have teens in the home, and that's why you'll need to adapt these according to your lifestyle and the age of your children.


World Council of Churches

They could hardly believe the good news: *"The Risen Lord Appearing to Disciples" by Dutch artist Kees der Kort*

"pain and hurt times." This may be the day to talk. Think about a time like this. What was it like? How did you feel? Share this story with your family.

Easter: Don't you love the days that feel like sunshine? Like rainbows filling the world? You've had some especially good news. Or you received the present you had been waiting for, and it was even better than you thought. There are many things in life that make us happy. Think about one special time in your life. What was the happiest thing that ever happened? Why did it make you happy? Share this story with your family.

4. Think about a poem

Palm Sunday:
I wonder what it was like
To be in the crowd
Shouting, "Alleluia! Alleluia!"
Waving branches,
Bending down
To lay my robe upon his way.
I wonder what it was like
That day.

Maundy Thursday:
Bread and wine
Are being passed,
And Jesus knows
This supper is the last
One with his friends.
Soon comes the traitor's kiss,
The trial, the cross, the loneliness,
And then the bitter end.

Good Friday:
"My God, my God,
You have forsaken me!"
Rings out across the plain.
Alone, he suffers misery and pain.
Dark world; black clouds
Loom up against the sky.
Please, tell me Jesus, did you have to die?

Easter:
This is a happy day.
The world is shouting, "Happy!"
The empty tomb cries, "Happy!"
Jesus is alive again.
Why not be happy?

5. Pray these words

Palm Sunday: Jesus, thank you for being a king. You are a mighty ruler. Nobody is greater than you. You rule the whole world. I respect you and honor you, King Jesus. Amen.

Maundy Thursday: Jesus, thanks for being a friend. Many people loved you, but you had some special friends. I want to be your special friend, too. I want to talk with you and tell you about my good times, and my hard times. You're a good friend. I know you understand. Amen.

Good Friday: Jesus, thank you for being a Savior. I feel sad because of the way you were treated. I'm sorry you hurt so much. You did all this for your people, and for me. Thanks for loving me so much. Amen.

Easter: Jesus, thank you for being a living Lord. I'm glad I'm alive in 1995, because I've heard the story before, and I knew how it would end. Your lonely times still made me care about you. Your hard times still made me sad. But today I am glad. I want to love you more than anything or anyone in the world. Thanks for Easter, Jesus. Thanks for a happy Easter! Amen.

Anne Neufeld Rupp lives in Olathe, Kan.

Easter defiance

Menno Wiebe

the cross
cut from its roots
dried up tree
bare
clothed only with the Son of God

the cross
upright and angled
intersecting at the heart

the cross
forced into the ground
designed for death
standing at the scene of crime

dead wood

and yet
human tendencies
to manage destiny of God
are here defied

the cross
despite its deathliness
bears life of One who comes alive
yielding
then giving life
for centuries to come

Menno Wiebe is director of Native Concerns for Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

Who is Christ?

Marilyn Black Phemister

He is primeval stone,
the rock unmoved by storms
of life, unchanged by pounding
waves and tides of history.

He is the cornerstone,
the foundation, the support
and strength of all
who trust in him.

He is the stone
from David's sling, chosen
to deal the death blow
to death itself.

He is the lodestone
of eternity, polarizing
the universe, repelling evil,
drawing magnetized hearts
to himself.

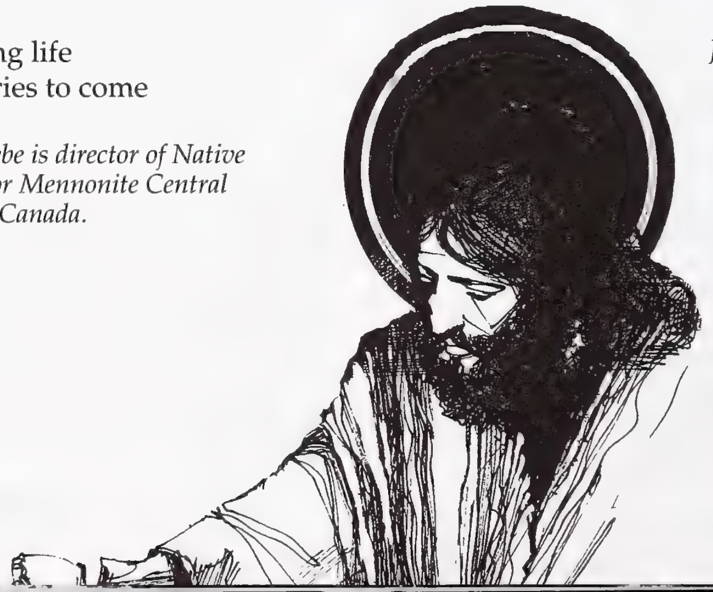
Marilyn Black Phemister lives in Larned, Kan.

Easter

J.O. Schrag

Walls crumble.
Webbed, musty corners become fresh and clean.
Tombs open, hearts unlock.
God breaks all chains
In the miracle of newness
On Easter.

J.O. Schrag lives in North Newton, Kan.

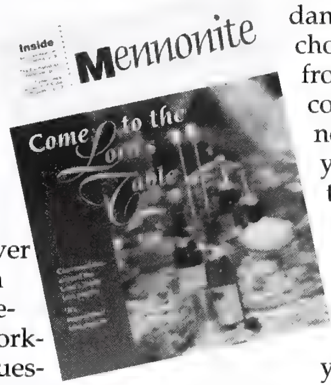


Letters

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Bravo! The Feb. 28 issue was a splendid treatment of the Lord's Supper theme. Thanks for all your work.

I appreciated the fact that you included so many individual quotations from participants and also that you opened the way for additional dialogue on the topic. I hope you will receive many responses. *Marlene Kropf, Elkhart, Ind.*



In response to the recent cover article on Communion, I am enclosing the proposed statement our congregation is working with. It addresses the question of who may participate. The question of how we celebrate is up next. *Rod Stafford, Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan.*

Editor's note: Anyone interested in seeing these statements may write to Rod c/o *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

I want to affirm Donald Steelberg's "Seven Reasons for Inviting Children to Take Communion" (Feb. 28 issue, page 5), believing that we in the Mennonite church have sinned more through exclusion than inclusion.

The small (not Mennonite) church where we worship serves Communion once a month. All children are, after their Sunday school, invited back into the sanctuary to participate in the Communion service. Last Sunday I watched the eager and happy participation of even the youngest and felt joy that the children felt included in the celebration. I also felt that this inclusion would, with time, help them understand the mystery and deepen their love for God.

Seeing this also brought to mind the pain that lingers from a Communion service 20 years ago in one of our [General Conference] churches.

Our younger daughters, then ages 13 and 15, had faithfully attended church membership classes. Toward the end we sensed reluctance and lack of joy in both of them for baptism. We respected their apparent need to wait a year or two to deepen their understanding and commitment.

To help affirm their friends, we urged them to attend the baptismal service anyway. That was a mistake, because it was as if we were not there.

Those who were baptized were lavished with attention and praise and were first to be served Communion. Then the elements were pointedly passed over our daughters' heads.

After that, church attendance became more of a chore. I believe exclusion from the Lord's Table has contributed to the fact that neither daughter has as yet been baptized and that participation in church has been cautious and marginal. *Name withheld by request*

Over the past few years I've been involved with worship renewal following and adapting the convergence model of worship by Bob Webber. His materials on worship, both books and seminars I attended, and the materials in "The Complete Library of Christian Worship" have helped me understand the great value of apostolic and orthodox worship. It has been a slow process, but significant changes have taken place here at St. John Mennonite Church (Pandora, Ohio).

Worship is the essential focus each Sunday morning in the two services we have.

On the last Sunday of the month a more specific focus is given to the Lord's Supper. That means we have the Lord's Supper at least 12 times [per year] during the morning services. A special Lord's Supper is celebrated on Christmas Eve. The Supper does not serve in a sacramental way but much more as part of the worshiping community, with times of prayer for help and healing and other responses if appropriate. It is a positive celebration of the meaning of the Lord's death and resurrection, and we always end with a song of victory. The somberness is not the emphasis. Furthermore, people are served by other members of the congregation, young and old, new or long-time members. Children participate as parents give permission, though we instruct that a measure of understanding should be part of the requirements to participate. It is not an issue; many children participate. We have had occasional foot washing but found the practice limited to a few participants. It is not practiced.

We follow the basic outline of worship renewal: service of gathering or entrance, then the focus on the Word and the Table (thanksgiving) in the services of the Word and the Table, and then the brief service of dismissal. Themes are chosen for each Sunday, at times in accord with the church year and at other times for other incidental but pertinent reasons. All services of gathering have a theme in which all music and spoken words are integrated as much as possible.

The overall response has been good. The early service draws about 100-125 and the second service about 400-450. There have been no complaints about the increased use of the Lord's Table in our midst; to the contrary. It means a lot more careful preparation. We often use smaller lead-groups for the singing as well, with brass and synthesizer. I recommend the materials by Webber and the resource of the library of Christian worship. *Ted VanderEnde, Pandora, Ohio*

JESUS AND THE POOR

I would like to thank Dick Weber for his letter (March 14 issue) on "Hatred Is a Heresy" (Jan. 24 issue). I reread the editorial again.

Yes, it does appear that our political leaders want to balance the budget on the backs of the poor. The Republicans' Contract [with America] should read, "Contract with America's Well-Heeled."

I don't think Jesus stopped to ask the poor and the sick if they were "illegal" immigrants or of what political persuasion they were when he fed and healed them.

Jesus had great compassion for the multitudes of the poor and the disadvantaged of his day. This is something that is apparently lacking with the Christian political force in our country today.

I want to thank the editor of *The Mennonite* for his straightforwardness and openness.

I don't want a bland, status-quo church paper. Then I don't think it has any reason for existence. *Jack Stauffer, Newton, Kan.*

From our leaders

A vision for healing and hope

Darrell Fast

Last fall Loretta and I took an eight-week, 7,100-mile trip, visiting 14 urban congregations within our General Conference: two in the Northern District, six in the western provinces of Canada (Winnipeg to Vancouver), two in the Pacific Northwest Conference, two in the Pacific Southwest Conference and one in the Western District Conference. Every place warmly received us.

Here are some impressions:

Urban congregations are on the cutting edge of Mennonite identity and witness in North America. The majority of these congregations, planted since World War II, were themselves instrumental in starting new churches. Another surprise was their involvement in Mennonite Central Committee Self-Help Crafts stores and sales. Here is a channel for service and witness that is fitting for the urban setting. We heard first-generation Mennonites play the "Mennonite game." No ethnic barrier there. The same could be said for the peace witness: "That is what attracted us to the Mennonite faith," we heard.

Identity in the urban context raises questions about religious diversity. Next door is the Christian Science Reading Room (as in Seattle). Down the street is the Mormon Church (as in Eugene, Ore.). Across the park is a Hindu temple (as in Regina, Sask.). A few blocks east is an Islamic worship center (as in suburban Winnipeg). This is the religious mix in urban North America.

We cannot afford to be unclear about who we are, what we live by and who we live for. We owe it to our children and our neighbors to have a Christian faith that is informed.

Urban congregations are themselves diverse. We were not able to worship with all 14 congregations on Sunday. But the eight that we did worship with had different worship styles. Invariably there was the Mennonite hymnal (either the rust-colored one or the new blue worship book). But there were also songs "off the wall." The Jubilee curriculum was used in at least 12 of the 14 (two congregations celebrated its introduction on the Sunday we visited). The Living in Faithful Evangelism program was visible and affirmed in 10 of the 14.

Urban congregations are hurting and in need of renewed understanding and support. Our trip was the source of encouragement but also of pain and despair. There are Mennonites from Minneapolis to Vancouver and Saskatoon to Phoenix who are hurting in the depths of their hearts and lives. In every place there was some discontent (either past or present). For example, theological disagreement and misunderstanding, leading to a church split; the troubling reality of pastoral abuse of power, leading to a loss of members; differing expectations between a mother and a daughter church, leading to a withholding of support, financial and spiritual.

In most of these ordeals, the unsung heroes were the charter members. We should see them as modern Mennonite pioneers who "homesteaded" in the city. In this new frontier they tried to stay focused on gathering a congregation that was inclusive in an evangelistic way, reaching out to their own children as well as other neighbors with Christian faith and love. This was no easy task for the Bergs and Neufelds and Thiessens and Bartels and Janzens and Unruhs and Goertzens and Boeses and Rempels and Linds and Schmidts and Stuckys and Hildebrands.

There is no shortcut to maturity, no simple formula for relevance or faithfulness, no road map to guarantee success; just a lot of staying power and faith in the God of steadfast love. To meet with these people was an inspiration.

Urban congregations are a mirror image of the General Conference reality as a whole. I had not expected to find congregations struggling to survive. Without exception, each congregation had faced the survival issue at some time.

By now, technology has almost eliminated the distinctions between urban and rural. The challenges our urban churches face are no longer theirs alone. All of us, whether rural or urban, new or old, are in need of a fresh vision for healing and hope.

We need to reflect once again on what it means to be a remnant. We are too enamored with growth and bigness. We need to focus on faithfulness in the midst of fragmentation and diversity. Let's not give up on our congregations. Let's give them the support and leadership they need to create an inclusive Christian community. When we are faithful, we can trust God to give the increase.

What is crucial to the survival and future well-being of our conference is quality pastoral leadership and quality life together as worshiping and witnessing communities. T.S. Eliot put it this way: "We have no life if we do not have life together."

Darrell Fast is pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan., and moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church. This is the first of a two-part article.

Speaking out

The great silence

Why Mennonites should celebrate 'Yom ha Shoah'

Mitchell Brown

On April 27 all Jews and many Christians will observe "Yom ha Shoah," a day in memory of the Holocaust. How many Mennonite churches will take part in this memorial? Not many. How many will even mention this memorial in their Sunday services?

This silence from the Mennonite community is particularly upsetting since we are a people who pride ourselves on our memory and in particular on our memories of martyrdom. Yet in the face of 6 million martyrs we have already forgotten.

Now at this point you may be saying that this is an unfair charge. "Yom ha Shoah" is a Jewish holiday. What stake do we Mennonite Christians have in its observance? And that is what I would like to write about. For "Yom ha Shoah" is a profoundly important *Christian* holiday. I have three reasons for this.

First of all, we did it. Christians killed 6 million Jews in the heart of "civilized" Europe. While few Mennonites were directly involved, the Holocaust was a product of years of Christian civilization. Though Mennonites early on withdrew from the organized churches of Europe, we still call ourselves Christians and see ourselves as in some part joined with worldwide Christianity. As such we must take responsibility for the massive failure of Christian discipleship that allowed the Holocaust to occur. More directly, the Mennonite church was quiet during the Holocaust. We have much to repent, and the observance of "Yom ha Shoah" would be a beginning.

The Mennonite church today has forgotten how dangerous Christendom can be. This is a lesson our Anabaptist ancestors learned well. They withdrew because they realized that the state Christianity of their day had become demonic. Such demonism is not a relic of the 16th century: It is alive and evil in the 20th century; it is the Holocaust. Are we Mennonites so taken by a wishy-washy ecumenicism that we are blind to the evils of a "Christian" world order? The observance of "Yom ha Shoah" would call us back to our sectarian roots.

Mary: Second, if this most general level is not enough, think more viscerally. Think of the "Christians" that would have been martyred in the Holocaust: Mary, Elizabeth, Joseph, Jesus, James, Stephen, Matthew. ... The list goes on and on. Had Hitler been around in first-century Palestine there would be no Christianity today. We focus our worship around the crucifixion of Jesus, yet when his entire family is crucified we have nothing to say.

We should not tolerate the forgetfulness of the church.

Finally, the Holocaust forces us to think about God. The destruction of the Jews is profoundly important. We cannot simply forget, because God never forgets. Or as Paul put it, "As regards the gospel they are enemies of God for your sake; but as regards election they are beloved, for the sake of their ancestors; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Romans 11:28, 29). Throughout Romans, Paul wrestles with the question of the fate of the Jews. It is clear that Paul could not forget the fate of the Jews. Imagine what his response would be to the Holocaust. Would he simply forget? By no means. Paul would never be silent, he would have wrestled with the problem of the Holocaust just as he wrestled with God's faithfulness to the Jews in his own day. We need a new Paul to explain God's action in the Holocaust.

We cannot have silence. The Holocaust is a profound revelation of the dark side of both God and ourselves. God is not simply "good news." For there to be Easter there must be the cross. While God promised much to Abraham, he also nearly took Abraham's "beloved" son Isaac on Mount Moriah. God is not simply good news.

We should not tolerate the forgetfulness descending upon the church. Such lack of memory is sinful. "Yom ha Shoah" is an important Christian holiday, and the Mennonite church should lead the way in its observance. Something is wrong when we spend more time remembering martyrs of the 16th century than those martyred in our own day, by our own people.

Mitchell Brown is pastor at Evanston (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

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Never again: *A scene from Germany in the 1930s*

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News

GC general secretary resigns

Newton, Kan.—Vern Preheim, general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) for the past 15 years, submitted his resignation in a March 3 letter to members of the GC General Board.

Preheim wrote, "After thinking about the transitions the General Conference is facing in the next three to five years ... it seems timely for a new general secretary to articulate a vision for General Conference and to attempt to bridge the diversity with a new unity for mission arising out of that clear vision."

Preheim

Preheim noted that the process of integrating the General Conference and the Mennonite Church, if approved at Wichita '95 this summer, would take several years. He wrote that it may be more timely for a new general secretary to be a part of that process from the start. As general secretary Preheim has overseen the growth of the integration exploration process since conference delegates voted to pursue the possibility at Normal '89.

The resignation was made public at the annual GC Council of Commissions meeting in Newton March 10-14. At the plenary session March 13, GC moderator Darrell Fast read the resignation letter and announced that the General Board had accepted his resignation, effective no later than November 1996.

Also during his tenure, Preheim oversaw the Call to Kingdom Commitments development campaign that in 1987 raised over $4.5 million for General Conference.

Preheim did not announce specific future plans but said in his letter that he would be open to a new role within the General Conference.

The General Board began putting in place a search committee, to begin functioning after Wichita '95. The board's goal is to name a new general secretary by March 1996, to begin no later than November 1996.

General Board approves integration, donation policy

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The General Board (GB) of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) adopted a new policy for distributing donations and endorsed a recommendation that the General Conference integrate with the Mennonite Church (MC) at annual sessions March 10-14.

The new donation policy is intended to strengthen the impact of designated gifts. It will do this by distributing undesignated gifts according to a budget proration rather than to where most needed.

Some donors and churches have felt that the effect of designated gifts was lessened because undesignated gifts have been used at year's end to shore up programs still in need of funds.

In 1995, undesignated gifts will be distributed as follows: 62 percent to the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), 20 percent to the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM), 10 percent to AMBS and 8 percent to the Commission on Education (COE).

Donors will still be able to give funds to where most needed if they identify their gifts in that way.

In presenting the proposal, GB member Jim Harder, North Newton, Kan., said it (1) had the potential to increase total GC income, (2) "more precisely respects the wishes of the donor" and (3) empowers the GB to divide the GC pie as needed.

"It will require us to be cognizant of the fact that we must all ask for donations for specific projects," said GB member Lee Delp, Lansdale, Pa.

When some members expressed discomfort with Delp's observation, GC moderator Darrell Fast, Newton, Kan., said, "We are freeing people to invite contributions, not coerce."

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CHM evaluates nature of mission in Hopiland / p. 15

COM looks at new mission options / p. 17

Meeting targets racism in the church / p. 17

Nineteen volunteers from North America traveled to Burkina Faso in February to help construct a house for Phil and Carol Bergen, serving there with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. The Bergens had only met four of the 19 before the group, organized by Orville Fricke of Archbold, Ohio, arrived. "It was an amazing group of people," Carol writes. "Some gave up two years of vacation time to be able to participate. The oldest participant had her 73rd birthday on the trip." The majority of the team came from the Evangelical Mennonite Church, which sponsors Dan and Kathy Petersen, also AIMM missionaries there.

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A workshop titled "The Occult and Generational Sin" convened March 4 in Goshen, Ind. Dean Hochstetler, ordained in 1986 by the Indiana-Michigan conference of the Mennonite Church for the ministry of spiritual deliverance, called for churches to talk more openly about the sins of the past, particularly those dealing with the occult: "One-third of Jesus' ministry dealt with the demonic world, and we moderns tend to play it down. ... There are not wicked spirits behind every tree and stump around. But it is equally foolish to see none." The gathering was sponsored by the Committee on Bondage and Deliverance of the Indiana-Michigan Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Jeremiah and Fanny Ross celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary at Cross Lake, Man. At the celebration the Cree couple recalled their early married life, taking furs to the Hudson Bay Company to barter. Jeremiah was baptized May 29, 1966, and ordained Feb. 4, 1968. "A person's Christian walk and marriage are alike. Though different problems arise, you need a lot of patience and commitment," he said. (*Intotemak*)

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The senior choir of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont., combined service with singing for their spring break last month. The 64-member choir undertook cleanup projects in Albany, Ga., and Homestead, Fla., organized by Mennonite Disaster Service. They also performed benefit concerts for the local relief efforts in both communities, raising $2,080. "This was a great way to spend March break," said chorister Matt Wagler. "It made me feel good to help others who were in need."

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Singer-songwriter and harpist Jaquelyn Brown has been named artist-in-residence at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Ont. She is a member of Valleyview Mennonite Church, London. Said dean and rector the Very Reverend Bruce Howe: "In our day and age, the soul of a person or a city will find meaning and gain wholeness when religion—in its broadest sense—and the arts call us to achieve our potential."

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The American Society of Missiology and the Association of Professors of Mission will hold a joint meeting at Techny Towers Conference Center in Chicago June 15-18. The theme will be "Mission Studies: Taking Stock, Charting the Course." For registration information, contact ASM secretary-treasurer George Hunsberger at Western Theological Seminary, 101 E. 13th St., Holland, MI 49423, (616) 392-8555, fax (616) 392-7717.

Dave Linscheid

New methods for a new policy: *GB member Lee Delp: "It will require us to be cognizant of the fact that we must all ask for donations for specific projects."*

The recommendation passed unanimously. The application of the new policy will take effect May 1.

Yes to integration: Despite concerns that the year 2003 was no longer included, the GB unanimously approved the Integration Exploration Committee's final recommendation for MC and GC integration. If approved by the MC General Board in April, the recommendation will go to MC and GC delegates for a vote at Wichita '95 in July.

"I'm frustrated as a GC leadership person at not having a date [for integration] because we have some significant decisions to make," Harder said.

"It was very clear that the MC General Board wouldn't accept the recommendation with the date 2003 in it," explained James Gingerich, Moundridge, Kan., integration committee co-chair.

MC General Board member Joseph Longacher, Richmond, Va., who was present as an official observer, reported that the MC board wanted to "soften the recommendation slightly in hopes that it would be more palatable to the delegates."

"Where we are right now is the leap of faith. I'm ready to go with it. We need to let the Holy Spirit and the congregations decide," declared GB member Loretta Baumgartner, Versailles, Mo.

The GB also

- approved the proposed "Vision: Healing and Hope" statement and the Confession of Faith for presentation to delegates at Wichita '95;
- affirmed inclusion of "Growing Together in Love: Guidelines for Mennonites When They Disagree" in the Wichita '95 workbook;
- decided that if MC-GC integration is approved, the next joint conference with the MCs will be in 1999 and a special GC conference will be held in 1997;
- affirmed GC participation in the "A Time To Listen" discernment process in churches across Canada in 1995, in cooperation with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and area conferences;
- decided that proposals presented last fall to restructure the GC into fewer commissions and better-defined Canadian and U.S. conferences should not be presented for delegate vote at Wichita '95 (they may be considered at the next GC conference);
- proposed that a preliminary statement on violence be adopted at Wichita '95 with the understanding that further work will follow;
- adopted a 1996 GC budget of $4,268,896, which is 4 percent lower than the 1995 budget;
- noted that the buying power of GC budgets from 1988 through 1994 has gone from $3,994,119 (adjusted for inflation and Canadian exchange) to $2,830,756;
- set the GC budget proration for 1996 as follows: COE, 9 percent; CHM, 21.5 percent; COM, 58 percent; AMBS, 11.5 percent;
- granted a 4 percent salary increase to staff, noting that no increase had been given to staff last year. *Dave Linscheid*

DGS shapes new giving policy

The Division of General Services reviewed GC giving trends and communication, and formulated a new policy for distributing contributions that was later adopted by GB (see page 13).

DGS also

- noted that 92.6 percent of the 1994 GC income budget was met, the third year in a row that income has been in the 90 to 93 percent range;
- noted that contributions from churches and individuals in the United States were down 1.1 percent, from Canada down 8 percent (in Canadian dollars); giving from U.S. churches was down 2.1 percent, from

Canadian churches 5.8 percent (in Canadian dollars);

- noted that income from noncontribution sources, primarily annuities and investments, was also down significantly;
- heard a report on creative fundraising, including solicitation via the Internet, affinity marketing through credit cards and long-distance telephone services and assistance from volunteers;
- encouraged staff of *The Mennonite* to work toward merger with the *Gospel Herald* should MC-GC integration be approved at Wichita '95;
- commended T*he Mennonite* staff for successful efforts to arrest the decline in number of subscriptions;
- affirmed the use of church bulletin inserts to communicate GC information;
- recognized the work of *Der Bote* editor Erwin Strempler, who is retiring at the end of 1995. *Dave Linscheid*

COE looks to loan for funds

The Commission on Education took initial steps toward taking out a business loan to resolve cash-flow problems at Faith & Life Press (FLP). COE staff told the commission it faced a choice between taking out the loan or making significant reductions in current staff and publishing projects.

"We either borrow money or we don't. If we don't, it has serious implications," said COE executive secretary Norma Johnson.

While FLP sales rose significantly in 1994, the rise fell short of projections, resulting in a cash-flow problem. Sales of products generated solely by FLP, which account for approximately one-third of FLP's gross profit, climbed from $84,000 in 1993 to $123,000 in 1994, but fell short of a $256,000 goal.

COE staff attributed the sales shortfall largely to delays in implementing Acumen, a new computer system that FLP hopes will boost sales. FLP still expects sales to grow after the new system is in place and plans to pay back the loan at that time.

COE members saw a loan as a necessary risk. "At this point we can't go back, we have to take the risk," said COE member Anne Unruh, Winnipeg. "The conference needs this publishing house."

"By creative use of the software, we hope to make a bundle and look like heroes, or none of us is going to work in this town again," said COE member Jeff Wright, Upland, Calif.

COE did not have the exact dollar figure needed to maintain operations and felt it needed a more detailed business plan to receive loan approval. Board members asked staff to put together a detailed business plan for a loan by April 30. They also took action to form a financial reference council to advise the FLP staff.

COE also

- celebrated the success of Faith & Life bookstores in Berne, Ind., and Newton, Kan. Both stores showed profits for the year. The Newton store has shown steady growth from a net loss of over $5,000 in 1985 to a net profit of over $55,000 in 1994;
- celebrated recent release of Generation Why, an integrated package of youth materials that includes *With* magazine, *Generation Why Bible Studies* and *YouthGuide*. *Larry Penner*

Time to move on integration: *Loretta Baumgartner: "Where we are right now is the leap of faith. I'm ready to go with it. We need to let the Holy Spirit and the congregations decide."*

Dave Linscheid

CHM looks at mission in Hopiland

The Commission on Home Ministries struggled with several recommendations requesting greater clarity about how the gospel should be presented at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., where most students come from homes where traditional Hopi religion is practiced.

Mennonite Voluntary Service workers who teach at the school are often asked by their

A youth-friendly subset of Mennonite Economic Development Associates aims to make the organization more responsive to young people early in their careers. Called Young MEDA, the program will find ways within MEDA to address issues faced by post-college members who have started their careers and are under age 35. Young MEDA is not a new organization; rather it is an attempt to find ways to address issues specific to younger MEDA members.

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Joe Campbell, Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Central Committee worker in Ireland, along with leaders from the Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland, hosted a Christian Citizenship Forum Feb. 9 with members of Sinn Fein, the political arm of the Irish Republican Army. Gathered at the YMCA in Belfast, the group of 200 listened to a biblical exposition on "Truth and Trust." Tom Hartley, national chair of Sinn Fein, and Martin O'Muilleoir, city councillor in Belfast, presented the positions of Sinn Fein and fielded questions. Campbell moderated the meeting and sought to humanize the two men, who have often been made into villains by Northern Ireland Protestant loyalists. "In a situation of violence, everyone is 'ghettoized,'" Campbell said, "but the present cease-fire gives opportunity to reach across our established prejudices to try to understand those who were enemies, and in doing this, dispel stereotypes." Campbell said people present seemed grateful for the opportunity to meet "the enemy," and experience firsthand that these men are also fathers and husbands who have deep fears, hurts and feelings of oppression. One woman, the wife of a Presbyterian minister, said through her tears, "I never expected to see this kind of dialogue happen in my lifetime."

"Media and Values" is the theme for the annual Council on Church and Media conference to be held June 1-3 in Chicago. CCM is a forum of Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren and Mennonite communicators. It is designed to facilitate and enhance communication, professional enrichment and fellowship among its members. For more information contact Dave Linscheid, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347; (316) 283-5100, fax (316) 283-0454, e-mail CompuServe 72147,2746.

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The Religious Public Relations Council recently announced awards of excellence for a Mennonite Central Committee-produced children's video, book and calendar. An MCC poster won an award of merit. "Letter from Laos" is a short video about Lao children and how unexploded bombs affect their lives. "A Dry Roof and a Cow: Dreams and Portraits of Our Neighbours" is a book commemorating MCC's 75th anniversary. "New Mercies Every Morning" is the 1995 MCC wall calendar. The "Racism: What do you see?" poster challenges viewers to open their eyes to racism. To order any of these, contact your nearest MCC office.

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Reduced tensions between Muslim fundamentalists and the Egyptian government in upper (southern) Egypt have prompted the Coptic Orthodox Church to invite Mennonite Central Committee to once again place a worker in the region. Last fall Coptic Orthodox Bishop Athanasias asked MCC to send an English teacher to Beni Suef, about 200 kilometers/120 miles south of Cairo. MCC workers left the community last spring due to violence. MCC had provided workers there since 1987. MCC has asked Brian Zook, a member of the Palmyra (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church, to go. Bishop Athanasias views the English program as a peacemaking ministry since it is one of the few places where Christians and Muslims in Beni Suef learn to know one another.

Dave Linscheid

Learning from each other: *Taiwanese pastor Kim Chen addresses the Council of Commissions through translator Sheldon Sawatzky. Chen was one of three representatives from the Taiwan Christian Mennonite Church to attend the meetings. The purpose of the visit was to foster the church-to-church relationship between the General Conference and the Taiwan Christian Mennonite Church. The GC mission in Taiwan was dissolved in 1993.*

students to attend religious and/or cultural activities. "MVSers don't have the resources to know what is appropriate," said MVS staffer Kathy Landis.

Marvin Yoyokie, Kykotsmovi, noted that there isn't necessarily agreement among Hopi Christians about this issue. "Some believe that since the MVS staff are Christian, they shouldn't attend any of the Hopi religious ceremonies. Others think that it is OK to observe them because it helps foster understanding," said Yoyokie, who is a school board member and a Mennonite Indian Leaders Council (MILC) representative.

There are two Hopi Mennonite churches located near the school. Both have representation on the Hopi Mission School board.

MILC representative Elmer Myron, Phoenix, said that some older Hopi Christians would likely feel "defensive" about another set of recommendations from the mission board.

But MVS director Chuck Neufeld countered that MVS was asking for clarity, not control. "We are struggling with what it means to share the Good News. MVSers are receiving confusing messages," he said.

CHM member Nadenia Myron, Phoenix, argued that the primary purpose of Hopi Mission School is to provide a Christian witness. "We should be consulting with the Hopi Christian elders about this," she said.

CHM passed the following two recommendations: (1) that MILC and CHM affirm the intent of Hopi Mission School board to write a mission statement, and (2) that MILC and CHM staff with direction from the Hopi Mission School board provide guidance to MVS teachers regarding ways to present the gospel that are clear about faith and the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and, at the same time, are noncoercive and respectful of Hopi culture.

CHM also discussed the Integration Exploration Committee's proposal for an integrated mission structure that would combine overseas and North American mission into one structure, the current model of the Mennonite Church. The GC structure keeps overseas and North American mission work separate. The model is contingent on a "yes" vote on integration at Wichita '95.

"It feels like we're getting pushed into the MC structure. I am concerned that if we would combine overseas and North American mission, much of CHM's work would be dropped," said CHM member Craig Maven, Berne, Ind.

CHM staffer Hugh Sprunger made "a plea for greater cooperation," noting that it is not as easy to draw a line between overseas and North American mission in today's mobile society.

CHM approved the proposal for an integrated missions structure with one opposing vote.

In other action, CHM

- agreed that the following resolution be brought to delegates at Wichita '95: that 1995 be declared to be a "Jubilee year of repentance and action regarding nuclear weapons";
- approved in principle the following three goals for joint GC and MC work in the area of congregational evangelism: (1) nurture spiritual health and orient congregations to missions and outreach, (2) instill a passion for mission and evangelism in congregational leaders, (3) enable members of Mennonite congregations, from an Anabaptist perspective, to articulate and demonstrate their faith

to those outside the church;

- finalized formation of three new divisions—resource ministries, MVS and outreach ministries—for CHM work. *Carla Reimer*

COM sees new mission possibilities

With relatively fewer resources and with stronger national churches overseas, Commission on Overseas Mission staff reported how they do much of their work in partnership with other mission groups.

The commission agreed to enter a new mission field next year. George and Tobia Veith, who are COM workers in Hong Kong, will begin church planting and evangelism work in Macau, an island off the coast of Hong Kong. The work is a cooperative effort of COM, the Hong Kong Mennonite Church and the newly named Taiwan Christian Mennonite Church.

COM is also discussing beginning work in Vietnam and Thailand or Laos. Some Mennonites from those countries, now living in Canada, have expressed interest in doing mission work in their native lands.

Another form of partnership is COM's cooperation with Eastern Mennonite Mission's Youth Evangelism Service program. YES provides training and opportunity for youth to do short-term work overseas. The terms are usually from six to 11 months. COM is receiving many requests for this kind of service, said staffer Karen McCabe-Juhnke.

COM's cash reserves swelled this year, mostly because of the termination of 27 missionaries. Many of these are retiring career missionaries. Eight of the terminations, however, were unexpected. There will not be nearly the number of new missionaries replacing these workers.

In fact, COM was presented only three candidates for service at this year's meeting. These were Shelly Bergen, Abbotsford, B.C., who is to do evangelism and church planting in Burkina Faso, and Bill and Betty Enns, Winkler, Man., who are to be country representatives in Lesotho. All three will serve jointly with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. The Enns' appointment is also with Mennonite Central Committee.

COM member MaryAnne Boschman, Abbotsford, B.C., said, "We need to get more workers for the field."

Charles Sprunger, COM member from Trappe, Pa., noting that of the current overseas personnel, 42 are from Canada, while only 30 are from the United States, said, "Canadians are putting us Americans to shame."

COM also decided to

- provide money for three church leaders to study in the United States—two from India and one from Mexico;
- use Japan reserve funds to build a house in Kobe, Japan, for COM workers Etsuko and Russell Sawatsky;
- affirmed forming an e-mail discussion group on missions issues;
- set aside $1,500 for a peace and mission center in Korea. *Gordon Houser*

Conference speaks to racism in the church

Chicago (*Gospel Herald*)—After the woman had washed Jesus' feet with her tears, Jesus turned to his host. "Do you see this woman?" he demanded.

"She's in the room, but Simon has never really seen her," said pastor James Offutt, Reba Place Church, Evanston, Ill., at the beginning of the March 3-5 conference on racism. "We do that all the time. We can't see for looking."

Some 200 people—four times the number originally expected—participated in the "Restoring Our Sight" gathering at the International Conference Center in Chicago.

"We must confess our historical sinfulness, our collusion with evil and our humble yearning for redemption," said James Logan, coordinator of Community Ministries, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S., Akron, Pa., speaking on the history of racism in the Anabaptist tradition. "We must be willing to confess that although we didn't pull the trigger on Native Americans, ... we now enjoy intergenerational wealth by way of the suffering of others.

"We need to address racism," he continued, "with the same energy we gave after Hurricane Andrew or the Midwest floods or the misery of the Rwanda crisis."

"There are no pat answers to this problem [of racism]. But we can consult the Lord," said Patricia G. Barron, Omaha, Neb., in her presentation on "The Biblical Basis for Anti-Racism Work." Speaking of Saul's conversion in Acts 9:1-9, Barron noted how "the

The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary library is now on line. Through the Private Academic Library Network of Indiana system users can access the AMBS library and more than 20 other academic libraries throughout the state. Both Goshen (Ind.) College and the Mennonite Historical Library are members of PALNI. The system can be accessed either through the Internet or by dialing in with a computer with a modem. Access the library at Internet "telnet maple.palni.edu"; log in as "amnetpac." For modem use, dial PALNI long distance at (317) 328-2385. There will be long distance charges with the dial-in number. For further information, contact Eileen Saner by office telephone: (219) 296-6233, or e-mail: eksaner@goshen.edu or 73766.1355@compuserve.com.

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North American Mennonite workers in Botswana witnessed riots there in January and February. The 14 workers in Botswana and their seven children are safe. "Although some Mennonite Ministries workers were close to the violence at various times, no one became directly involved or sustained injuries. Mennonite Ministries property was not damaged," reported Eugene Thieszen in a Feb. 20 fax. Thieszen serves as a Bible teacher among African Independent Churches. In late January students began protesting police handling of the murder of a 14-year-old girl. Police had arrested four suspects but released three, citing lack of evidence. "The riots come as somewhat of a surprise," remarked Jim Shenk, Mennonite Central Committee Africa co-secretary. "While there has been some growing dissatisfaction, Botswana has been considered one of the most politically stable countries on the continent." University unrest does not necessarily indicate an unstable situation, Shenk noted.

"Today Christendom is in its death throes," Douglas John Hall told students and faculty at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in lectures Feb. 22-23. Rather than trying to hold on to the church's dominance, Hall challenged listeners to see the decline "as a doorway to a future more in keeping with what our Lord had in mind when he called disciples to redeem the world through love, not power." Hall, professor of Christian theology at McGill University, Montreal, was a guest at AMBS to present the annual theological lectureship. "The most urgent message of the divine Spirit to the churches in North America is that they should disestablish themselves," he said. "We have an opportunity seldom seen in Christian history to become salt, yeast and light. But we must relinquish the centuries-old goal to be big and successful, to be the official religion of our culture. Our Lord's metaphors for his community of witness were all modest ones: a little salt, a little yeast, a little light."

RESTORING OUR SIGHT

scales fell from his eyes: the scales of prejudice, the scales of elitism, the scales of being the privileged one. ...

"Racism is a sin. We first need to realize that we are sinners," she said. "We need to confess it, to ask God to remove the scales from our eyes."

But this is only a first step, noted Ray Lopez, Chicago, in a discussion on "Creating Anti-Racism Models." "There is a false peace we have inside our community. We don't challenge [racism when we encounter it]," he said. "We have to talk about power."

Stan Maclin Sr., Richmond, Va., agreed. "[We can't] ignore some of the realities that exist. There are almost zero persons of color on executive councils."

Addressing racism requires deliberate action, Maclin added. "It wasn't by accident," he said, that the Mennonite Church nominating committee proposed an African-American, Dwight McFadden Jr., to be moderator-elect.

Ridding the church of racism isn't as simple as addressing personal attitudes and actions by individuals, said speaker Joseph Barndt, director of Crossroads Ministry, Chicago. Racism is systemic, he stressed, and must be dismantled on an institutional level.

"The first Christians were exclusive. It blew their minds when the Gentiles heard the story of Jesus and received the Spirit," Barndt said. Eventually the believers decided that Gentiles could join the church—but on one condition: "They have to be circumcised. They have to become Jewish, they have to become assimilated and become like us.

"Praise God, the Gentiles said no," Barndt continued. "And they had to have another church council meeting. Before that meeting, they organized, they prayed—and they brought about systemic institutional change. ... [It took] another knock-down, drag-out fight. [But] in the end they decided: In the church of Jesus Christ, you come as you are. There is no Jew or Greek, male or female, slave or free.

"The Mennonite church has made the first decision: Come join us, but you must become like us. Don't expect the institution to change," Barndt said. The second decision awaits. "If you can institutionalize racism, you can institutionalize anti-racism. We have the ability to change institutions, not just complain about institutions."

"Institutional racism in the church is like a drug user," said Brent Foster, associate pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., in the closing worship hour. "[Racist] actions are not really the problem; it's something deeper." While church agencies may try to deal with the "symptoms" by diversifying staff or reallocating resources, "the real problem is self-identity."

Referring to Galatians 6, Foster encouraged listeners to work vigorously against racism, but with gentleness. "Our brothers [sic] are trapped and they don't know how to get free [from the bonds of racism]," he said.

We are called to "restore our brethren [sic] ... that we truly become a beloved community," Foster said.

"Restoring Our Sight" was sponsored by a number of agencies, headed by the Anabaptist Anti-Racism Educators and Organizers Network. In addition to a planning committee, Regina Shands Stoltzfus and Jody Miller Shearer of MCC U.S. provided leadership. *Cathleen Hockman*

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Record

DEATHS

Arthur H. Friesen, First Church, Reedley, Calif., died March 3 at age 87. He served under the General Conference's Board of Foreign Missions from 1940 to 1958, working with Native people in Oklahoma.

MINISTERS

Eleanor and **Perry Beachy** will resign as pastors at Bergthal Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan., in early 1996.

Dave Bergen was installed Feb. 19 as pastor at Steinbach (Man.) Church.

John Coffman will resign as pastor of North Bay (Ont.) Church when the church closes.

George Derksen is resigning as pastor at Crystal City (Man.) Church this summer.

Walter J. Dick is serving as interim pastor at Deep Run Church, Bedminster, Pa.

Gordon Driedger is remaining as youth pastor at Ottawa Church.

Ray Erb was installed Jan. 15 as pastor at Maple View Church, Wellesley, Ont.

Craig Friesen has resigned as youth pastor at Steinbach (Man.) Church, effective this summer.

Jim Groeneweg is serving as interim pastor at Spring Valley Church, Newport, Wash.

Peter G. Janzen is resigning as pastor at Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask., in September.

Tom Kauffman is resigning as pastor at Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.) to be part of the Ohio Conference's (MC) conference pastoral team.

Ruth Naylor is serving as Central District interim conference minister, beginning May 1.

Anne Nofziger is serving as interim pastor at Cincinnati Fellowship.

Gordon Penner has resigned as youth pastor at Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, effective this summer.

Neville Peterson began March 1 as pastor at First Church, Upland, Calif.

Keith Poysti resigned as pastor at Burrows Bethel Church, Winnipeg, effective the end of March.

Alvin Rempel is beginning as pastor at Whitewater Church, Boissevain, Man., this summer.

Jane Roeschly is serving as Central District interim regional conference minister for Iowa and Missouri, beginning May 1.

Carl Schartner will resign as youth pastor at Sterling Church, Winnipeg, this summer.

Alex Wall will begin as associate pastor at Springfield Heights Church, Winnipeg, in May.

April Yamasaki was licensed Feb. 19 as pastor at Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, B.C.

WORKERS

Dietrich and **Dorothy Rempel**, Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C., left for Germany the first week in March for work with the Aussiedler, sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Suter

Taylor

Carol Suter, Kansas City, Mo., has been appointed director of member and resource development for Mennonite Economic Development Associates.

Dale Taylor, Winnipeg, has been named associate executive director for Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

George Wiebe was named professor emeritus by Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, in February.

Openings for **residents** at **Menno House**, a Christian community in mid-Manhattan, **314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003, phone/fax (212) 673-7970.**

Hopi Mission School in scenic Arizona is seeking applications for a **school principal** (K-7). Certification required, experience preferred. Housing, utilities and a modest salary are provided. **Apply immediately**. Contact **Glen Boese, (602) 734-2453 or 734-2455 (evenings)**.

Teachers are also needed. Please contact **Mennonite Voluntary Service, 722 Main St., Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100**.

Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church reported that it received 97 percent of its 1994 budget of $185,000 and adopted a 1995 budget of $181,500 at a March 11 meeting in Newton, Kan. WM representatives also had the opportunity to listen to guest He Hong, a Chinese pastor studying at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. WM is providing some of her financial support.

* * *

Mennonite Men of the General Conference Mennonite Church reported receiving $58,134, including donations to the Tenth Man church building program, in 1994. MM representatives met in Newton, Kan. March 11. They also took action to approve the following 1995 Tenth Man grants: $24,000 to the Community of Love Mennonite Church in Philadelphia and $18,000 to the Columbia Basin Mennonite Community Church, Ephrata, Wash. Current applications for Tenth Man funding total $110,000. MM coordinator Heinz Janzen noted that at the current rate of giving, it would take until 1999 to fill these requests.

* * *

The General Conference Mennonite Church received more than $170,000 in fraternal benefits from Mennonite Mutual Aid during 1994. The Mennonite Church received $710,000. Most of the grants were part of $1,083,973 in MMA Sharing Fund grants distributed in the U.S. Anabaptist community. Sharing Fund grants are used to help meet needs for assistance in health insurance premiums, unpaid medical expenses, adoption expenses, burial expenses and needs caused by an accident, disaster or disability. The Community Service Grant program also distributed $74,707 to 138 congregations to support 90 local community service projects ranging from health clinics to housing for low-income families.

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Need harvest help mid-May through August or November.

Contact **Lance Martens Custom Harvesting, (316) 463-2426** (leave message).

Christopher Dock Mennonite High School has the following full-time positions open for the 1995-96 school year: **director of guidance** and **math instructor**.

Send résumés or inquiries to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446-4398**.

Mennonite Central Committee (Alberta) invites applications for the position of **executive director**. Duties include program leadership and supervision, communication with the constituency, staff supervision and office administration. Starting date is negotiable but preferably no later than Jan. 1, 1996.

Please send applications, including résumés and salary expectations, and arrange for three letters of reference to be sent directly, **by May 31**, to **M. Hunsberger, Personnel Committee, 8613—34 Ave. NW, Calgary, AB T3B 1R5; (403) 286-4613; e-mail: hunsberg@acs.ucalgary.ca**

Goshen College seeks applicants for the position of **admissions counselor**, to begin July 1. This assignment is for one year. Responsibilities include representing the college among prospective students and their parents and communicating with prospective students. Qualifications include a commitment to Goshen College's mission, writing and speaking skills, willingness to travel, a bachelor's degree and, preferably, related experience. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and résumé, including three references, to **Marty Lehman, Director of Admissions, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. Application deadline: **April 14** or until position is filled.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for Self-Help Crafts **computer services manager**. Qualifications: Christian faith commitment, church membership and commitment to nonviolent peacemaking; college degree or equivalent experience in systems analysis and design; four years experience with FoxPro and another computer language; understanding of business and administration; leadership and teamwork ability. Salaried position which provides administration, systems analysis and programming for Self-Help Crafts. Responsible for a network of 50 personal computers in office, warehouse and store settings.

Interested people contact **Goldie Kuhns, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**.

Hinkletown Mennonite School is interested in receiving applications for a **director of development**. Applicant must be a mature Christian who understands Christian education and has a bachelor's degree or equivalent experience. Should have knowledge of the principles and techniques of development, including organization, management, personal finances and marketing. Shall demonstrate leadership skills, have the ability to work with students, patrons and people of the community.

Interested parties should contact the school for more information: **Hinkletown Mennonite School, 272 Wanner Road, Ephrata, PA 17522-9314; (717) 354-6705**.

Menno House Managers. Congregation seeks live-in managers, preferably a couple, to oversee guest house and resident community as part of our mission.

Contact **John Rempel, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003, phone/fax (212) 673-7970.**

Eastern Mennonite University seeks a **vice president for advancement**. Full-time, 12-month position beginning July 1, 1996. Chief development officer for the university reporting to the president. Supervises alumni and parent relations; development; communications; community, church and foundation/corporate relations. The qualified candidate will have a master's degree, experience in administration, fund raising or related fields (i.e. business, insurance, law or marketing); will be committed to and understand Christian higher education; must be committed to Christian faith and practice in the Mennonite tradition; a good oral and written communicator and able to motivate others. There are no physical requirements.

Application deadline: **June 1**, subject to extension or reduction. Non-Caucasians are encouraged to apply. If interested, please contact **President's Office, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22801; (703) 432-4100.**

Goshen College has openings for a **male residence hall director** and a **female residence hall director**. Each director is responsible for the administration of a residence-hall complex housing about 200 students. Responsibilities include representing the Student Development Division in the hall and presenting student needs and concerns to the administration. The director also counsels students, enforces policies and standards, handles discipline and educational programming and selects, trains and supervises student staff. Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred. People from underrepresented groups encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application and résumé, including three references, to **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. Applications accepted until position is filled.

School administrator: Individual with leadership and business skills needed. Prefer degree in business administration or education with experience in administration and fund raising. Proficiency in Spanish a strong plus. Should be available by Aug. 1.

Send résumé to **Lora Miranda, Academia Menonita Betania, Box 2007, Aibonito, Puerto Rico 00705; (809) 857-3513.**

Eastern Mennonite University announces a **faculty position in art**: Full-time position beginning fall 1995. MFA required. Teaching experience at the college level preferred. Evidence of academic leadership and entrepreneurial skills highly desirable. Responsibilities: to assist in the development of the art major and minor and to give visibility to the program. To teach ceramics and basic art courses.

Send résumé **by April 20** to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**. EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

First United Mennonite Church, a diverse, multilingual congregation in Vancouver, is seeking a **pastor** to lead its emerging English-speaking group. The size of the group is approximately 125, composed mainly of young adults and young families. Applicants should have previous pastoral experience, strong preaching skills, be outreach oriented and have the ability to promote leadership to home Bible study groups.

FUMC also has an existing German-speaking congregation (275 attendees) and a small Spanish group (50). The ideal candidate will be someone who can help the English group establish itself and reach out into the surrounding community. This is an excellent opportunity for someone who is interested in working with a growing congregation in an urban setting.

All applications will be confidential. Please forward résumés to **Pastoral Search Committee, First United Mennonite Church, 659 E. 52nd Ave., Vancouver, BC V5X 1G8.**

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The successful applicant will be a member of a Mennonite congregation with a commitment to Mennonite education and a vision for the life and mission of the Mennonite church. Effective public communication skills in working with supporters of different age groups and genders, as well as corporate and business representatives, are required. Applicant shall require initiative and be free to travel extensively in both provinces. Need ability to work closely with administration and office staff. Competence in computer work and experience in both constituency and financial work will be assets.

This is a full-time position with employee benefits. Salary and starting date are negotiable.

Send résumés to Erwin Tiessen, Principal, Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0; (306) 232-4222; fax (306) 232-5250.

We seek your counsel and prayers

as the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary presidential search committee begins its assignment. Please send your counsel and suggestions to:

Anne Stuckey, P.O. Box 1142, Elkhart, IN 46515-1142
Vern Preheim, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347

AMBS Presidential Search committee:

Lydia Harder, Scarborough, Ont. (GCMC)
Vern Preheim, Newton, Kan. (GCMC)
Tim Schrag, Beatrice, Neb. (GCMC)
Rick Stiffney, Goshen, Ind. (MC)
Anne Stuckey, Somerset, Mich. (MC)
Orville Yoder, Goshen, Ind. (MC)
Jacob Elias, faculty representative
Patty Friesen, student representative

AMBS is dedicated to helping ministers of Jesus Christ grow toward spiritual maturity, theological depth and discernment, wise pastoral practice, and personal commitment to God's reign of peace and righteousness.

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Gayle Gerber Koontz brings a "constellation of gifts, interests and experiences" to her teaching at AMBS. This includes a nurturing congregation when she was young, teaching high school and college, working in communications for Mennonite Central Committee, and the study of scripture, ethics and theology.

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Reviews

FILMS

BASKETBALL IS LIFE

Hoop Dreams, *directed and produced by Steve James, Frederick Marx and Peter Gilbert*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Hoop Dreams takes you into Chicago's inner city by way of a basketball. What you find there are people, ordinary families, trying to make the most of limited options and dreaming for their children.

For the families of *Hoop Dreams*, basketball is a way out. To them a middle-class life for their sons is a dream as distant as the presidency. So the boys shrug off studies and gamble for a future by pouring everything they have into basketball. Most don't make it. They spend their lives reminiscing of high school glory days. For Arthur Agee and William Gates, the dream carries them from a promising high school freshman year through the crapshoot into their future.

At the film's outset, a scout identifies both Agee and Gates as potential future all-stars. The boys receive a scholarship to St. Joseph High School in suburban Chicago and begin what they hope is a quick rise to glory. Throughout high school they experience injuries and setbacks as they struggle to balance families and friendships in the inner city with the demands of basketball and white America.

Hoop Dreams shows us the conflicts between inner city and suburb, between wealth and poverty and between black and white. But the film does not moralize. By focusing its lens on the sport, not the injustice, *Hoop Dreams* manages to capture the environment without needing to pass judgment. Is the game a player-production machine that eats children as raw material? Or is it a window of opportunity in an otherwise sealed fate? The film begs questions; it does not give answers.

Viewers may find thinking so hard tiring. The lengthy (almost three-hour) film is a documentary made for Public Broadcasting System. It does not create the high suspense and melodrama we expect in movie theaters. Instead it draws its power by portraying the truth of families caught in America's inner cities. We have enjoyed Hollywood's dramatization of these families' reality (*Sugar Hill, Menace II Society, Do the Right Thing*). With *Hoop Dreams* perhaps we can begin to see them honestly.

BOOKS

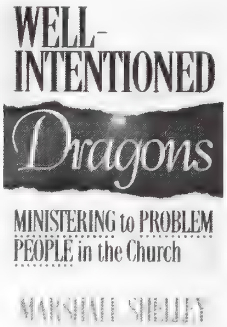
FACING PROBLEM PEOPLE

Well-Intentioned Dragons: Ministering to Problem People in the Church *by Marshall Shelley (Bethany House, 1994, 153 pages)*

Reviewed by Matt Friesen, Wichita, Kan.

I have been told there are two things in life that are sure: taxes and death. However, I am tempted to add "dragons" to the list of pastoral inevitabilities.

In his book *Well-Intentioned Dragons*, Marshall Shelley writes with breadth and insight into a reality few pastors care to discuss. It is an unfortunate fact that there are those in the church whose fiery breath can quickly char a small village, much less a humble, caring and faithful pastor, sister or brother.



Shelley does a thorough job of illustrating the breeds of dragons (the habits of antagonistic people), where dragons tend to live (at the beginning of a pastorate, in comparisons with former pastors, etc.) and some practical approaches to dealing with these unpredictable beasts.

Two of Shelley's reminders are especially helpful. First, he reminds us that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure when it comes to approaching potentially difficult individuals before they become dangerous.

Second, Shelley's discussion re-emphasizes the importance of the pastoral and congregational support systems. The existence of written job contracts, memos of understanding and ongoing communication among the pastor-congregation relations committee, the church district, the conference minister and others make available important mediation tools.

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While full of insight, Shelley's case studies tended to focus on catastrophic dragon-attacks and less on the day-to-day struggles with less ferocious reptiles.

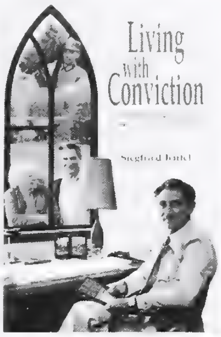
I applaud Shelley for an insightful and witty exploration of a less than comfortable subject. With honesty and depth he reveals that sometimes the beasts that appear most deadly become the most supportive after being treated gently but firmly.

NAZISM TO PEACE WORK

Living with Conviction: German Army Captain Turns to Cultivating Peace *by Siegfried Bartel (CMBC Publications, 1994, 212 pages)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

A lesser-known aspect of our history includes those Mennonites who fought for the German army in World War II. We so much assume that our Anabaptist history guarantees a peace position that it is hard to imagine faithful Mennonites fighting at all, let alone on the side of the Nazis. Yet a number of Mennonites whose faith I admire were once German soldiers on the "wrong side."



Siegfried Bartel was one of many Prussian Mennonites who joined the German army. Heavily influenced by pietism, it never occurred to him that fighting was wrong. He thought military service was his duty, as so many Christians assume in every war. He calls this story the journey "from awareness to conviction."

Bartel fought in France, Poland and Russia. An officer, he was wounded and awarded the Iron Cross. At certain moments he began questioning his involvement: when he ordered a young man's execution and when he realized some relatives might be fighting for the other side. The most important turning point for him was hearing Russian soldiers, the enemy, singing Christmas carols.

The first part of this book is the most interesting. It chronicles affluent Mennonite life in West Prussia, Bartel's war involvement, and the struggles in post-war Europe.

Bartel and his family came to Canada after the war. I wanted to learn more about the experience of immigration. Early on, Bartel showed many leadership skills. He became involved in local politics on the school board and worked on the Doukhobor crisis that arose in British Columbia in the 1960s, when the Doukhobor immigrants from Russia refused to send their children to public schools. Eventually, he served on all levels of Mennonite Central Committee boards and traveled to many countries in that capacity. He is honest about the joys and frustrations of that work.

In the latter half of the book, Bartel details all his involvements but tells few stories. (Some stories he does tell are critical of others and feel a little ill-advised.)

He tells of speeches he gave here and there, for example: his renunciation of his military past and admission of guilt, his concern for honoring laypeople in the work of the church, and more. But he mentions these in passing and focuses more on the details of his itinerary. I wish he had given us his speeches and spelled out his ideas. I was especially interested, given the book's title and subtitle, in knowing more details about how Bartel moved from convinced, patriotic militarist to committed, Mennonite peacemaker.

While the book was worth reading, I came away wishing for something more from this fascinating man.

A note from the author

In *Living with Conviction* I referred on page 22 to an observation I made as a teenager of the relationship between my father and two of my uncles.

Of Uncle Gustav I wrote, "He was a caring family man, but that did not carry over to his relationship with 'all' his neighbors."

Some have interpreted this to imply that Uncle Gustav did not get along with "any" neighbors, which is untrue. After the incident described thereafter, the relationship between Uncle Gustav and Wilhelm Beuttel was restored to friendly terms.

Wilhelm Beuttel and I served together as officers in the 45th Regiment and became friends. Up to the time when everyone fled their homes, Uncle Gustav's relationship with my father was warm and friendly.

I regret that my "teenage observations" written as they were are open to misinterpretation.

My apologies to all concerned. *Siegfried Bartel*

Resources

- **Overcoming the Threat of Death: A Journal of One Christian's Encounter with Cancer** by Arie Brouwer (Eerdmans, 1994, $9.99 U.S.) moves from the author's early feelings dealing with his cancer to later thoughts on his life's work. Brouwer was former general secretary of the Reformed Church in America and general secretary of the U.S. National Council of Churches.
- **The Scandal of a Crucified World: Perspectives on the Cross and Suffering**, edited by Yacob Tesfai (Orbis, 1994, $16.95 U.S.), explores the meaning of the cross today for the world's suffering millions. Contributing theologians come from around the world.
- **Being God's Partner: How to Find the Hidden Link Between Spirituality and Your Work** by Jeffrey K. Salkin (Jewish Lights Publishing, 1995, $19.95 U.S.) offers concrete ways to invite the spirit back into our work.
- **Church World Service cards** are available, including Word of Life biblical note cards, HeartNotes post cards, and CWS global greeting cards. Order from CWS, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515.
- **Ethics After Christendom: Toward an Ecclesial Christian Ethic** by Vigen Guroian (Eerdmans, 1994, $12.99 U.S.) offers a vision of Christian life influenced by the experience of Orthodox Christians.
- **Preaching that Connects: Using the Techniques of Journalists to Add Impact to Your Sermons** by Mark Galli and Craig Brian Larson (Zondervan, 1994, $10.99 U.S.) includes options for illustrations, key techniques for generating ideas, and 10 rules for great storytelling.

Concerns? Call *The Mennonite* at (316) 283-5100.

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Editorial

The better part

Resurrection is not something we do. God is the one who brings life out of death. Anne Neufeld Rupp (see pages 3-7) calls us to celebrate Passover, Good Friday and Easter as times to remember that it is God who brings salvation. We need to apply God's grace in all aspects of our lives.

Everywhere I go I hear this refrain: "I'm so busy." Or, as a friend said the other day, "I wish I had more time." People don't feel they have time to just sit and relax or to be with their families. I find myself saying the same thing.

At the recent Council of Commissions (see page 13) I was talking at lunch with Marilyn Miller, director of outreach ministries for the General Conference Mennonite Church. Each of us felt harried by schedules, travel and now hours of meetings—all good things. However, we lamented, "in the church we only seem to affirm people for what they accomplish." If we told people we were taking time off to do nothing but be with our families and relax, we'd probably get strange looks.

Marilyn said she's so busy doing "the Lord's work" that she doesn't have as much time as she'd like to pray. Something's wrong here, we agreed. But what do we do about it?

We need to learn to sit at the Lord's feet and be still, to realize that who we are depends not on what we accomplish but on God's grace.

These patterns of busyness, of seeing our worth in what we accomplish, are deeply ingrained in our society. They are also reflected in Mennonites. Service, doing good deeds, is our bane and our blessing. Our church does many good deeds, serves many people, yet we burn out many of our leaders. We place extraordinary expectations on our leaders, which may be one reason we have so many openings in leadership positions and are finding it difficult to fill them.

How do we change these patterns? Such change requires radical action. Look at the story of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42). Martha is clearly the Mennonite, scurrying around doing her service, then resenting her sister for not doing anything. But "Mary has chosen the better part," Jesus says.

Jaws dropped: Having been in a Palestinian home, I realize she has also made a powerful break from societal custom. Our group ate lunch with a family in Bethlehem. The mother of the house prepared the meal, then afterward, while the men sat in the living room, she served dessert to everyone, then picked up the dishes (though a few of us Western men helped her). Later she served coffee. I gained a glimpse of what must have been even more customary in Jesus' day. The women didn't sit down with the men while there was work to do. But Mary did, and Jesus affirmed her. Jaws must have dropped when he did.

Can we affirm Mary's action—rather, her being? Can we encourage one another not be so caught up with accomplishing things?

Richard Rohr writes about what happens when we strip away our masks of success. He once spent a month in solitude (not something many us can afford or feel inclined to do) and found that his identity as someone others needed was falling away. He writes in *Radical Grace*, "In solitude, at last we're able to let the Lord define us the way we are always supposed to be defined: by relationship, ... in relation to a Presence that demands nothing of us but presence."

In other words, God is not so impressed by all the things we accomplish but only wants us to be in the Holy Presence. This is not easy; it goes against the grain. To take such inaction we will need one another's encouragement.

Busyness is like a sickness that has infected most of us. Its opposite is not laziness. Lao-Tse said, "Doing nothing is better than being busy doing nothing." We need to learn to sit at the Lord's feet and be still, to realize that who we are depends not on what we accomplish but on God's grace.
Gordon Houser

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For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ

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APRIL 25, 1995

- Youth get a bum rap (see page 3)
- What do our youth believe? (see page 5)
- 7 ways to capture the mission imagination of youth (see page 7)

What our Youth believe

Prologue

How well do the youth and the adults in our congregations communicate? Do the youth mainly listen to adults, then talk among themselves? Or is there opportunity and encouragement for adults to listen to youth?

This issue offers at least a glimpse of how our youth are thinking about certain issues and what they believe about certain articles of faith. Some responses may elicit surprise, others encouragement. Take a look at the tables on pages 5 and 6. Perhaps your congregation wants to set up some kind of dialogue between youth and adults. For such a dialogue to happen, however, there must be an atmosphere of acceptance and true listening. The slightest hint of prejudgment will turn youth away from responding honestly to questions.

Read pages 7 and 8 for some ideas on how to encourage youth to consider mission. Page 8 describes a new resource—called Generation Why—designed to help youth address the challenges they face daily.

Marlene Kropf offers some guidelines for leading public prayer (see page 11). And J.B. Miller builds on his earlier column (see our March 14 issue, page 12) to help us make sense of life insurance choices (see page 12).

Pass this issue on to any youth you know who do not receive *The Mennonite*. Or call us and we'll see that they get a copy. *gh*

Next issue: Churches working at healing from abuse

Cover: Photo by CLEO Photography

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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General
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Church

Youth get a bum rap

A recent study shows that Mennonite youth are optimistic about their lives.

Carla Reimer

According to Abe Bergen of Winnipeg, today's generation of teenagers frequently winds up getting a bum rap in the media. "Youth are often portrayed in more negative terms. They are seen as confused and skeptical," he says.

The church is also guilty of stereotyping. "We need to give our youth better press coverage. We can't paint them all with the same brush," says Abe, who is the director of youth ministry for the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

A recent study of teenagers who are regular church attenders, conducted by Barna Research Group, showed that at least some young people are upbeat about their lives, says Bergen.

A total of 3,795 youth from 13 denominations, including the General Conference (GC) and the Mennonite Church, responded to the confidential questionnaire. Forty-eight percent were male and 52 percent were female. The survey was completed in January 1994.

Abe collected the data for the study about GC youth. A total of 307 GC teenagers from 40 churches in North America responded; the majority was Caucasian, with 87 percent in grades 9 through 12, and 77 percent with an average grade of an A or a B.

The eight-page survey asked youth to respond to questions in these areas: background characteristics, family relationships, relationships with the opposite sex, daily challenges, beliefs and perspectives about life, and religious background.

The study showed that 81 percent of GC youth are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their lives and that 61 percent are upbeat. Skeptics accounted for 34 percent, while 58 percent of GC youth said they feel confused.

Family relationships: The fact that 90 percent of GC youth are living with their natural father and mother "spoke well for family stability," says Abe. "I was a bit surprised by this statistic—it is about 20 percent higher than the overall survey sample."

In addition, 81 percent of GC youth rated their overall family experience as positive, and 68 percent said their homes are places where they feel secure and loved.

GC youth had high ideals about marriage: 89 percent agreed that God intended marriage to last a lifetime and only 3 percent expected marriage to end in divorce. However, 35 percent claimed that it is very hard to have a successful marriage in today's world.

They tended to be less traditional in their views about what constituted a family: 53 percent defined family as "any person or group whom you love or care about deeply or who love or care about you deeply," compared with 38 percent who defined family as "people related to each other by birth, adoption or marriage."

"We need to continue to work at connecting youth to the church. If our youth are not a part of our programs, we are not making an impact."

Abe Bergen

Abe is disappointed with the statis-

Marilyn Nolt (for illustration purposes only)

Personal relationships and a clear purpose for living are important to youth.

> **"Our youth are becoming more and more a part of mainstream culture."**
>
> **Abe Bergen**

tic that showed that GC youth generally do not spend much time talking with their parents about substantive issues. Sixty-four percent of GC youth spend 30 minutes or less per week talking with their fathers "about things that really matter," and 48 percent spend 30 minutes or less talking with their mothers.

"Some people say that statistic is realistic. I think it says more about our fast-paced culture," Abe says. "Obviously, we have some homework to do in the area of family. I think many of our families are vulnerable due to stresses."

Still, 86 percent of GC youth indicated that they feel very close or fairly close to their mothers, and 79 percent said they feel very close or fairly close to their fathers.

Relationships with the opposite sex: The survey focused on attitudes about physical contact, including sexual intercourse, with the opposite sex. Only 8 percent of GC youth have had sexual intercourse with the opposite sex compared with 16 percent for the overall survey sample.

Secular studies of teens in the United States and Canada state that more than 50 percent of teens have been sexually intimate by the time they have graduated from high school.

It may appear that GC youth are less sexually active than the mainstream, but Abe says he thinks it would be wise for the church "to be more aware that our youth are becoming more and more a part of mainstream culture. Some of them have bought into the societal view of love, where it is OK to have sexual intercourse if you are in love with that person. We need to do a better job of reminding them that biblical love is about commitment."

Daily challenges: Lying topped the list of moral challenges facing GC youth today: 65 percent have lied to a parent, teacher or other older person, while 56 percent have lied to a friend or peer. A total of 18 percent have smoked a cigarette or used another tobacco product, and 12 percent have been drunk.

Values and perspectives: Seventy-five percent or more of GC youth said the following conditions are important for their future: good physical health, a close relationship with God, personal relationships, a clear purpose for living and one marriage partner for life.

While GC youth and Mennonite Church youth responded similarly to most of the survey questions, they differed on the statement that only the Bible provides a clear description of moral truth: 58 percent of GC youth agreed with the statement compared with 73 percent of Mennonite Church youth.

That statistic concerned Abe, who says, "I believe the Bible is God's Word. The message of the Bible is relevant today and for all time. It is not just another ethical book."

Since the survey sampled the opinions of youth who regularly attend church, it was not surprising that the majority regularly prays to God and is involved in various religious activities, he says.

If anything, says Abe, the survey proves that "we need to continue to work at connecting youth to the church. If our youth are not a part of our programs, we are not making an impact."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

What do our Youth believe?

A selection from a survey questionnaire

Abe Bergen worked with Barna Research Group and Josh McDowell Ministry to survey the values, beliefs and lifestyles among church youth. These denominations participated in this study: the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church, Assemblies of God, Church of God—Cleveland, Church of God—General Conference, Church of the Nazarene, Foursquare Gospel Church, Free Methodist Church, the Friends Church, International Pentecostal Holiness Church, the Salvation Army, Southern Baptist Convention, the Wesleyan Church. The following data compares the 307 churched youth from the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) with the 3,795 total surveyed. From the larger survey, we have selected only a few questions and responses.

Think about your life during the past three months. Indicate which, if any, of these activities you did during that period of time.

Activity	Yes	
	Total	GC
1. watched MTV at least once a week	45%	34%
2. watched an X-rated or pornographic movie	16%	13%
3. used some type of illegal, nonprescription drug	8%	7%
4. cheated on an exam or other evaluation	36%	31%
5. stole money or some other material possession	15%	13%
6. lied to a parent, teacher or other older person	66%	65%
7. lied to one of your friends or peers	59%	56%
8. attempted suicide	5%	3%
9. read a pornographic magazine	12%	7%
10. drank enough alcohol to be legally drunk	12%	12%
11. intentionally tried to hurt someone physically	20%	17%
12. intentionally tried to hurt someone emotionally	23%	21%
13. gambled or bet your money on something	20%	15%
14. smoked a cigarette or used another tobacco product	23%	18%

Have you ever made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in your life today?

Yes		No	
Total	GC	Total	GC
86%	78%	14%	22%

If the opportunity presented itself *today*, how likely would you be to have sexual intercourse with another person if:

	More likely		Less likely		No difference	
	Total	GC	Total	GC	Total	GC
1. your friends strongly encouraged you to do so?	11%	6%	31%	27%	58%	67%
2. you were in love with the person?	45%	51%	19%	15%	36%	34%
3. you really intended to marry that person?	44%	48%	19%	14%	37%	38%
4. you were positive that a pregnancy would not result?	26%	29%	25%	16%	49%	55%
5. you knew that your parents would not find out?	25%	27%	24%	19%	51%	54%
6. you felt that your parents would not mind?	22%	24%	24%	19%	54%	57%

Mark one answer next to each statement to indicate whether or not you agree or disagree.

	Yes		No		Not sure	
Statement	Total	GC	Total	GC	Total	GC
1. The main purpose in life is enjoyment and personal fulfillment.	29%	26%	55%	53%	16%	21%
2. It's better to get even than to get mad.	12%	7%	79%	84%	9%	9%
3. In times of trouble or crisis, I feel all alone.	40%	40%	47%	46%	13%	14%
4. Sometimes I wonder if life is worth living.	38%	43%	53%	51%	9%	6%
5. One person cannot really make a difference in this world.	22%	15%	66%	74%	12%	11%
6. Everyone needs a hero in his or her life.	62%	51%	23%	29%	15%	20%
7. I know one or more adults whom I feel really have it together.	75%	80%	11%	10%	12%	10%
8. There is nobody whom I consider my hero or model for life.	24%	24%	65%	65%	11%	11%
9. Life is too complex these days.	49%	52%	34%	32%	17%	16%
10. What I think doesn't matter.	19%	15%	68%	69%	13%	16%
11. The future will be better than today.	34%	30%	30%	26%	36%	44%

Mark one answer next to each statement to indicate whether or not you agree or disagree.

	Yes		No		Not sure	
Statement	Total	GC	Total	GC	Total	GC
1. The Christian faith is relevant to the way I live today.	69%	67%	12%	8%	19%	25%
2. The Christian churches in my area are relevant to the way I live today.	56%	53%	19%	16%	25%	31%
3. The Bible is totally accurate in all its teachings.	70%	52%	10%	15%	20%	33%
4. I personally have a responsibility to tell other people about my religious beliefs.	68%	62%	15%	16%	17%	22%
5. The devil (Satan) is not a living being but a symbol of evil.	31%	29%	49%	41%	20%	30%
6. There is really a place of permanent suffering which is known as hell.	80%	70%	8%	11%	12%	19%
7. If people are generally good, or do enough good things for others during their lives, they will earn a place in heaven.	22%	24%	62%	50%	16%	26%
8. What I do for other people is more important than what I believe about Jesus Christ.	14%	12%	74%	68%	12%	20%
9. There are a lot of hypocrites in my church.	32%	30%	29%	25%	39%	45%
10. All good people, whether or not they consider Jesus Christ to be their Savior, will live in heaven after they die.	13%	11%	69%	60%	18%	29%
11. Jesus sometimes made mistakes.	17%	17%	67%	61%	16%	22%
12. It does not matter what religious faith you follow because all faiths teach similar lessons.	21%	18%	54%	52%	25%	30%
13. No one can really prove which religion is absolutely true.	40%	54%	34%	23%	26%	23%
14. A person can experience a relationship with God personally.	84%	86%	5%	3%	11%	11%
15. Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Jews and all other people pray to the same God, even though they use different names for their god.	21%	21%	52%	49%	27%	39%
16. When it comes to religion, what you do in life is more important than what you believe.	15%	13%	62%	54%	23%	33%
17. When it comes to religion, what kind of person you are is more important than what you accomplish.	43%	42%	27%	23%	30%	35%
18. There are some sins or crimes that are so serious that they cannot be forgiven by God.	18%	10%	68%	77%	14%	13%

7 ways to capture the mission imagination of youth

Here's how mission opportunities can meet the goals of youth as well as the church's broader mission purpose.

Michael Bogard

Mike, a senior in high school, applied to go on our first Western District Conference mission encounter trip to Guatemala. Our goals were (1) to challenge youth with the importance of mission and service, (2) to provide youth with an opportunity for a cross-cultural overseas mission experience, (3) to educate youth about world needs and opportunities and (4) to create interest in youth for a future mission/service assignment or vocation.

Mike's goals were to improve his spoken Spanish and to learn more about a different culture and way of life.

After three weeks in the Central American Study and Service program, Mike came home enthused. Our goals and his goals had been met. Last summer he returned for an extended service and mission experience in a school and now wants to go back with another group of high school youth this summer to help them have a similar experience.

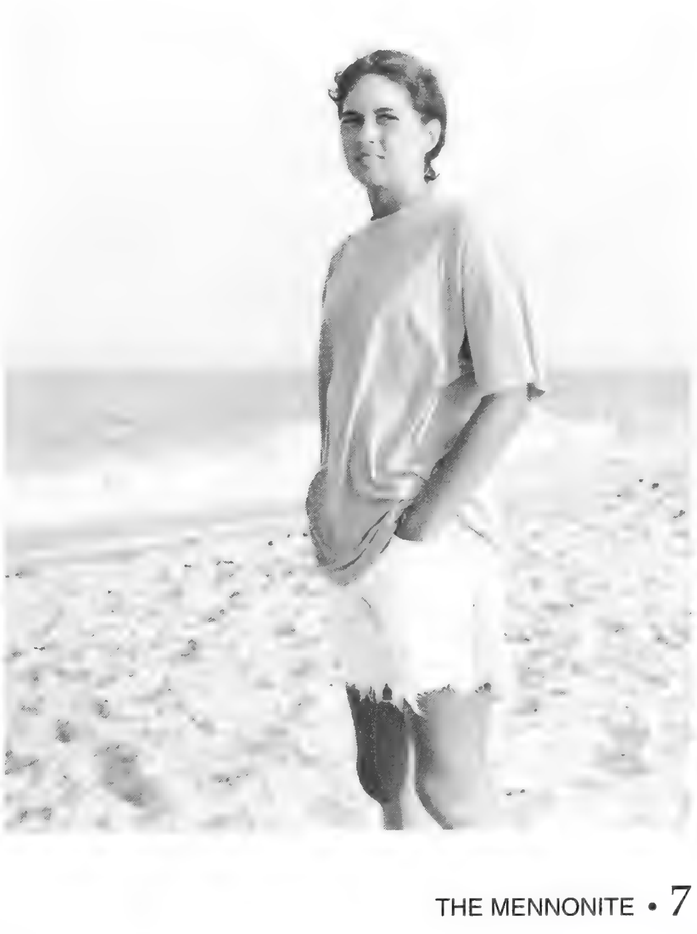
1 Mission needs to be defined. Many youth today do not know about mission or what mission means. Evangelism, through the Living in Faithful Evangelism (LIFE) process, has only recently been readdressed in our congregations. Many pastors, youth leaders and parents rarely expect the presence of youth at mission festivals. And youth hear too few stories of what God is doing in mission. Their understanding of mission is defined by past stereotypes and their service experiences. For many, mission means painting a house one day and going to a water park the next. Although they may feel the responsibility, few youth feel able to tell someone about their faith.

In addition, we in the Mennonite church have made it more difficult to understand mission. We have MCC, MVS, MDS, VS, YES, Service Venture, Group Venture, Service Adventure, DOOR, SWAP, SWEAT, TOOLS, STAT and so on. All these agencies are good, but their multitude muddles the meaning of mission.

2 Mission needs to be taught. As the survey (see page 6) suggests, many youth challenge the notion of mission because they are not convinced Christianity has any greater validity than any other religious belief. What can mission mean if that premise is the starting point? If youth are accurately reflecting the congregations in which they have been nurtured, then the church must come to terms with its relativism before it can engage in mission with new energy. At the same time, the church can harness the beliefs of youth—that they can make a difference, that the future is in their hands and that God is in control of the mission enterprise.

Mission—what it means, what it is about, why it is necessary, who can be involved—needs to be taught in as many youth settings as possible.

3 Mission needs to be broadened. In a culturally diverse setting, youth are aware that Muslims are here and in



Marilyn Nolt (for illustration purposes only)

A new resource for YOUTH

Generation Why is a new resource package that consists of *With*, a youth magazine dedicated to radical Christian discipleship; *YouthGuide*, a quarterly newsletter for adults working with youth; and *Generation Why Bible Studies*, a series of flexible Bible studies designed to help youth address the challenges they face daily. *With* and *YouthGuide* are available now, while the Bible studies will be available this coming fall.

"We feel that the Generation Why youth resource package breaks ground because it tackles the tough issues of a new generation of youth," says Mark Regier, Faith & Life Press director of marketing and Generation Why promotion coordinator. "The material reflects the more urban, more sophisticated, more culturally diverse and more technologically aware lives of young people today."

The *Generation Why Bible Studies* will be produced by Faith & Life Press, publisher for the General Conference Mennonite Church, and Brethren Press, publisher for the Church of the Brethren. *With* and *YouthGuide* are published by Faith & Life Press.

For more information about Generation Why, contact Faith & Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; 1-800-743-2484; or Faith & Life Press Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781.

GENERATION WHY

Finding Answers to the World's Tough Questions

> ***The church has a tremendous opportunity to give youth the tools, the opportunities and the power to change the world for the sake of God's kingdom.***

Africa and the Middle East. If economics is going to dictate what youth and young adults can do and what the church can do, then youth need to discover mission in their own communities. In practical terms, this means encouraging language and cross-cultural studies, creating culturally diverse congregations and introducing more cultural variation in worship.

4 Mission needs to be experienced. Mike's story is the most powerful example of what it can mean for a young person to experience mission firsthand. Adults who work with youth should also be encouraged to have cross-cultural experiences. The power and influence of personal relationships must be tapped in order to excite interest in mission.

5 Mission needs new heroes. The young adults engaged in mission must tell their stories and build relationships with young people. Youth groups can be encouraged to sponsor a mission worker. Youth groups can develop sister relationships with youth groups in another culture or nation. Youth groups can travel together on trips to see mission firsthand, learn to know the people and become a part of their lives.

6 Youth need to broaden their awareness. Too many youth have bought the materialism and individualism of our society. They have become desensitized to the real pain, hurt and oppression in the world. They are unaware of how they participate in that oppression and how they are also its victims. If youth can broaden their awareness, it will deepen their compassion and concern for those who need to hear and experience the good news.

7 Youth need to be empowered. In spite of the fact that so many youth believe they can make a difference in the world, few know what to do. The church has a tremendous opportunity to give youth the tools, the opportunities and the power to change the world for the sake of God's kingdom.

Youth are an incredible force. They have energy and creativity that the church rarely taps. Those of us who work with youth know about this power, but we often run up against the same walls that block the contributions of young people. What would happen if, instead of going after the dollars for mission, we went after the energy for mission? What would happen if so many youth became excited about the mission of God's kingdom that we didn't have enough places for them?

Mike Bogard is youth minister for the Western District Conference.

Letters

THE CHURCH IN CHINA

I noted in the Feb. 28 issue that your next issue was to be about the church in China. I grew up in China, where my father, C. Lloyd Pannabecker, was medical director of the General Conference Mennonite Church hospital in Puyang (Kaizhou), Henan. During the past year I have had contact with Hu Sulian, the daughter of my father's associate, Dr. Hu, and one of my childhood playmates. She is now semi-retired as a dermatologist and is active in the Protestant church in Anyang, a town about 100 miles from Puyang. She is the organist and music director in that church.

During the last two years that we have been communicating, their church has grown to the point where much of the congregation has had to remain outside for services. The church has become so crowded that they have begun building a new church. Since Anyang is on the main railroad from Beijing to Guangdong (Canton), the government has allowed the church to solicit funds from the United States to build a bigger church. Sulian reports that the second floor of the church is covered, so they decided to use the church for their Christmas service this year. They thought the main floor would be adequate, but even the second floor was full. They had almost 3,000 people attending the service, and 1,000 stayed for lunch after the service. She says, "We decorated the church with colored lanterns and flowers. The Christmas trees are so beautiful, thank God our Chinese church has been revived." Sulian also notes that their church leaders are elderly and frail. (One of their ministers is 90.) She says, "We know that ministers are few and members are so many, just the same as other places in China."

Many of the missionaries were discouraged about the church in China after Mao's "liberation" of the country. It has been good to hear from Hu Sulian and other friends that the church not only survived but has grown since the missionaries left in the 1940s. *Betty Jean Pannabecker, Denver*

BE MENNONITES FIRST

I can't help but think that in organizing a merged GC-MC church along Canadian-U.S. lines we would be like generals refighting the last war or politicians rehashing the last election.

Such a move is thinking for the last century, not the next. While Mennonite money and power will stay in North America for at least the foreseeable future, Mennonite growth is coming from other continents.

Perhaps some mechanism needs to be created to solve local problems, but this would be better done at the conference level. If we can't be Christians first when we meet as a denomination, at least let us be Mennonites first.

What kind of relationship would a nationalized North American Mennonite Church have with the majority of the world's Mennonites? In China many growing churches call themselves "post-denominational" (see the March 14 issue). In Africa some congregations discuss dropping the names "Brethren in Christ" and "Mennonite" in favor of "Anabaptist." Can these Christians, who are so new they pay more attention to theology than custom, be blamed for not being able to understand—even to see as petty—the concerns that have so long divided North American Mennonites? For that matter, can't the same be said for the unchurched in North America, whom we say we are trying to reach?

In many parts of the world that are producing the new Anabaptists, national boundaries mean much less than they do in North America. Maybe we can learn something.

Just as the United States and Canada are much larger than Goshen, Ind., or Kitchener, Ont., the world is much larger than the United States or Canada. Once again we need to ask ourselves where our first allegiance lies—to lines drawn on the earth by humanity or to the Creator of those who drew the lines and that upon which the lines are drawn. *Wayne Steffen, Goshen, Ind.*

AN EMBRYO IS NOT AN EGG

Robert Erck in his March 28 letter accuses me of misquoting him. He didn't say a human embryo was not human. He said it was not a human being—in the same way that a chicken is not an egg.

Webster's Dictionary defines "being" as "a living person or thing." So a cat is a feline being, and a human embryo definitely is a human being—not a being of some other species.

Also, a human egg stops being an egg and becomes a distinct human individual at fertilization. In other words, an embryo is not an egg. Since life beings at fertilization, a fertilized chicken egg is a chicken. *Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

CONFESSION

Re "Closure Sought in Processing of Abuse" (March 14 issue, page 19), I realize that my sin caused deep pain in the Arvada Mennonite Church in Colorado and in the larger Mennonite community. I deeply regret the hurts I brought to all those whose trust I betrayed. I appreciate the efforts of the Western District Conference ministerial committee and the Arvada congregation in working toward healing of the trauma caused by my transgression. *Peter J. Ediger, Las Vegas, Nev.*

Editor's note: Robert Erck's letter in the March 14 issue was not intended for publication. We apologize for the error.

Ideas your church can try

Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.: Last September the church gave two youth awards. One went to "the individual who best exemplified Christ-like behavior as defined in Galatians 5:22-23 during the past year as a member of the youth fellowship." The second was a Sunday school award, to one who participated willingly and joyfully.

Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.: The youth held a contest to raise funds for service and fellowship. If they raised $600 by a certain date, they got to place pastor Howard Habegger in the medieval dungeon pit at Menno-Hof in Shipshewana, Ind.

When thrones are empty

Darrell Fast

The prophet Isaiah (read Isaiah 6:1-13) received his summons to be a prophet in a time of transition, when thrones were empty, "in the year that King Uzziah died." Transitions are times of uncertainty and anxiety. What does the future hold? Who will lead us? How will we find our way? Dare we be hopeful at such a time as this? Such questions must have been on Isaiah's mind as he entered the house of God that day.

We too are in a time of transition. Many of our institutions have leadership vacancies. Look at all the search committees—at our colleges, our seminary, Mennonite Central Committee. Thrones are empty.

There is a discordant spirit in society and in the church. It is a spirit that divides us, not a vision that brings unity, healing and hope.

During our itineration to urban congregations last fall (see April 11 issue, page 10), Loretta (my wife) and I experienced these realities. I was surprised by how frequently issues of human sexuality were part of our conversations. Abortion, divorce and remarriage, pastoral abuse, women in leadership, homosexuality—issues that are divisive in society—also swirled around these congregations.

Once we visited a retired couple at home. The woman remarked how diverse their growing congregation was, "like a mini-United Nations." Then her husband said, "I know how we could solve our problem of not having enough room on Sunday morning. We could start a rumor that there are some homosexuals among us and we're looking for a woman pastor. Our church would become empty in a hurry." He smiled.

I was dumbfounded. (Did he not know about the member of his congregation who was in counseling about his sexual orientation?)

Things are coming apart. Where is the center that can bring us together when it seems that thrones are empty? Where is the vision to bring healing and hope, when there is a spirit abroad that threatens to tear us apart?

I take some comfort from an article in the Feb. 6 issue of *Christianity Today*. Don and Carol Browning chide both religious liberals and conservatives in America for "being so preoccupied with abortion and homosexuality that they have glossed over the less sensational stresses of people trying to raise children to healthy adulthood. It is now time to reconfigure these two divisive issues in a larger context."

Can we catch a glimpse of that larger context, a vision that brings healing and hope rather than pain and brokenness? Isaiah found hope in a time of transition when thrones were empty: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple."

Royal robe: Here is a vision big enough to unite the most diverse of peoples and the most disparate of perspectives. Isaiah's vision of the Holy One was so awesome, so majestic, that the mere hem of the divine, royal robe filled that spacious temple. Isaiah saw only the hem, but that was sufficient to move him to fall on his face in worship and contrition.

This is where we must begin, with a vision of the "tremendous mystery" of the Holy One. We have become too preoccupied with the issues presented to us by the world around us. That is true for both the liberal and conservative ends of the faith spectrum. We are losing our way, because we have forgotten the transcendent God at the center of our lives. The vision that can unite us and heal our brokenness comes in the context of worship when we catch a glimpse of "the hem of God's robe." There is something more to our life than what our senses can tell us. Our modern age, shaped by the Enlightenment, has not been friendly to such a vision.

The vision that can bring healing and hope begins with a sense of transcendent mystery, but it leads to a recognition of human unworthiness. Isaiah bemoaned his human condition of sin: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips."

The extent of our sense of unworthiness and sin is in direct proportion to our perception of the holiness of God.

It is also here that our solidarity with all people resides. Our common humanity lies not in our goodness or our achievements, when placed in the context of God's holiness, but in our sinfulness, our failure to measure up to the best God has called us to.

We begin with a glimpse of transcendent mystery. We are moved to confess our human unworthiness and sin. But we are also embraced by divine mercy and grace, which empowers us to new responsibilities.

For Isaiah, the summons came to persevere in the prophetic word, even when people refused to pay attention. And when Isaiah posed the question, How long am I supposed to do this?, he was reminded to be faithful to his calling. God would act in due time to restore a remnant from "the stump."

The tasks God calls us to are not the kind that yield to easy solutions or instant growth. We are called to mold Christian character and build inclusive, moral communities that are a beacon, a city on a hill that will bring glory to God. Often our congregation-building work will appear fragmentary and insignificant, a remnant. But if we are steadfast and faithful, in due time God will give it growth.

Darrell Fast is pastor of Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., and moderator for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Learning to pray

How to lead public prayer

Seven guidelines for leading public prayer

Marlene Kropf

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Not long ago a young adult Sunday school class invited me to lead the first session in a series on prayer. They wanted to discover how prayer could become a more significant part of their life. Several of them said, "We don't know how to pray in public. We can do almost anything else—speak, lead a group or even lead singing, but we are uncomfortable if someone asks us to pray." Their confession led me to wonder: How do young people learn to pray in public?

One of the ways I learned to pray aloud as a child was at family mealtimes and in Sunday school class. Teachers occasionally asked students to lead the opening prayer or join in intercessory prayer for the world and the needs of people we knew. Later, when I became a teenager, I learned to pray in public worship services when young people were invited to lead the young people's portion of the Sunday evening service. At a Mennonite high school I also participated in public prayer in small groups and in student-led chapels.

Although I would not have claimed I was comfortable leading prayer as a young adult, I would at least have felt capable of doing so if asked. Probably the only way to learn to pray in public is to do it—first in family and small group settings and then in larger gatherings.

One pastor I know has begun training young people to lead public prayer by inviting 11- and 12-year-olds to help lead the pastoral prayer on Sunday morning. She meets with the child on Saturday to talk about the special prayer requests that will be included. Together they formulate a prayer of intercession. She may encourage the child to write the prayer as a way of becoming comfortable with a new task. On Sunday morning she begins the pastoral prayer and at a certain point stops to include the child's prayer; then she concludes the prayer. By her mentoring she is equipping the youth of the congregation to become effective leaders of public prayer.

Some beginning guidelines for leading public prayer include the following:

1. In public prayer, pray on behalf of the congregation, not as an individual. Choose your words thoughtfully with the purpose of inviting everyone to pray with you. Though it is appropriate at times to use "I" and "me" language in public prayer, ordinarily use plural pronouns. Choose vocabulary that is commonly understood by the group, not archaic terms, cliches or flowery phrases that distract from prayer.

Probably the only way to learn to pray in public is to do it—first in family and small group settings and then in larger gatherings.

2. Shape prayers so that others may follow. Give thought to how you address God, not always using the same forms of address but varying them to fit the purpose of the prayer. For example, in leading a prayer of petition or intercession, address God as "merciful God" or "gracious and loving God." A prayer of praise may begin, "Almighty God" or, "God, our Creator." A good place to look for models for ways to address God is the worship resources found in the back of *Hymnal: A Worship Book.*

3. It is always appropriate to begin a prayer by praising and thanking God. When we praise God, we recognize God as the source of our life and take our place as created ones.

4. In prayers of petition or intercession, avoid generalizations and make requests specific. For example, instead of praying in a vague way for someone who is ill, "God, be with Susan (or George)," pray, "Gracious God, comfort Susan who is ill; give her peace and restore her to health."

5. A public prayer should not be hurried. Spaces for silence are appropriate. If you can't think of what to pray next, wait until you become aware of what else is on people's hearts.

6. Train yourself to notice what is going on in the environment and incorporate it into the prayer. For example, if a baby cries loudly during public prayer and distracts everyone's attention, pray simply, "Thank you, God, for the sounds of children in our midst. Bless each child with your love and grace." The same response may be given to a sudden rainstorm or distracting thunder crashes.

7. God welcomes our praying and receives all our attempts to communicate—whether they are halting sentences or well-constructed paragraphs. If you know someone is a novice at leading public prayer, encourage them by letting them know how their prayers helped you come into God's presence.

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Questions about prayer? Send them to Marlene Kropf, c/o *The Mennonite,* P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Making sense of life insurance choices

Some things to consider in weighing your options

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Many people understand the necessity of life insurance, but one significant barrier people often cite for not buying life insurance is that it is complicated.

Most of us have a general concept of term life insurance, but to make the best decision you should have a working knowledge of the other types available.

Beyond term insurance is the cash value policy. In this type of policy some of the premium is going to purchase life insurance, and the balance of the premium is building up inside the policy and is referred to as "cash value." These funds can be used to pay future premiums, but you can also borrow against the funds.

Cash value policies are explained using policy illustrations. These show how cash values build up, using examples contingent on what interest is credited to your accumulating cash value. It is important to remember that the illustrations are just that—illustrations. With the exception of the guaranteed rate, none of the illustrations is guaranteed. The guaranteed rate is usually much lower than the current rate, so be aware that the rate may drop. Some salespeople will present unrealistic illustrations. Be cautious of these illustrations and the salespeople who present them.

Cash surrender value usually grows slowly in the early years of the policy, since the salesperson is getting compensated for the sale of the policy. Cancellation during this time, when no cash surrender value is accumulated, means you will receive no funds.

When comparing life insurance policies with a variety of companies, the surrender value is one aspect you may compare. But be sure to compare cash surrender value over both the short and long term. Commissions and other expenses vary from company to company, so some policies will accumulate cash value more quickly. Focus on the guaranteed rate and not on illustrations that seem unrealistic.

Three types of cash value insurance that are popular today are whole life, universal life and variable life.

Whole life is the simplest to understand. The face amount of life insurance (or death benefit) is a fixed amount, and the premium stays the same each year. Since the premium is greater than is needed to pay the death benefit, cash value accumulates. Interest earned on the cash value is tax deferred. In time, sufficient cash value builds, and a loan may be obtained against these funds. Some whole life policies allow for premiums to be paid for a fixed number of years, then the cash value is used to pay for future premiums.

Universal life insurance contains both a fixed death benefit and premium. However, the universal life policy gives some flexibility in varying the premium payments as well as the amount of the death benefit. Universal life allows you to design a policy that fits your needs today with the flexibility of changing as your needs change.

The policy can be structured like whole life but with the greater flexibility that universal life offers. While there are certain advantages to universal life, it is important that you check periodically that you are making enough premium payments to keep your policy in force. Making extra premium payments in the early years will help assure that there is a sufficient cash cushion to meet future premium requirements.

An increasingly popular form of life insurance is **variable whole life**, or **variable universal life.** With variable whole life, the annual premiums are fixed, but the growth of the cash value is dependent on investment choices you make. Variable universal life has the flexibility of universal life, but again the growth of the cash value depends on your investment choices. Investment choices usually include a number of sub-accounts into which you may invest the cash inside your policy. If you choose a sub-account that has outstanding performance, your cash value will grow more quickly. Of course, if you choose poor performing funds, your cash value may not grow at all.

Questions to ask when considering variable life are these: Do you have the investment expertise to make reasonable investment choices? Do you want to assume the risk of a poor performing investment choice? Life insurance needs to be seen as an integral part of Christian stewardship and estate planning. Making sure family members are adequately taken care of in the event a wage earner dies is an important issue.

Another unique but not widely known possibility with life insurance is that it may provide an opportunity for people of modest financial net worth to create a large bequest to their favorite charities.

When purchasing life insurance, deal with a salesperson you trust and a reputable company. As a wise steward, you should become knowledgeable about life insurance options available. Keep in mind that you have the best tools to assess what is best for you and your family.

Glossary

Cash value: Dollars above the portion used to cover death benefit premiums. These excess funds accumulate and may be used to pay future premiums, but the policy owner may also borrow against them.

Cash surrender value: The amount of dollars that will go to the policy holder if the policy is canceled.

Sub-account: The investment choices available under a variable life insurance policy.

AMBS window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Focus

What is your vision for AMBS?

We, at AMBS are asking you the question: What is your vision for AMBS?

Yes, **you.** Because you—if you are a member of a Mennonite or General Conference Mennonite Church congregation—are a part of AMBS just as AMBS is a part of your life in the church.

This issue of *AMBS Window* asks members of the AMBS leadership team about their vision for AMBS and for the partnership between the church and the seminary. Reflect on these six statements, then on your own vision for theological education in the church. As AMBS seeks new leadership, let us hear your voice.

Partnership for ongoing work

Gayle Gerber Koontz

The texture of our church-seminary partnership is a rich mix of shared faith, goals, and practical effort. We have built a strong fabric which will support us as we work together:

1. in valuing and promoting church vocations;
2. in calling people to consider pastoral ministry and church leadership as a vocation;
3. in developing congregational settings for supervised ministry education;
4. in financing education for ministry through wise stewardship in the giving and the use of gifts;
5. in prayer for and encouragement of seminary students, faculty and supervising pastors;
6. in cooperative research in congregational studies such as exploring and evaluating practices in initiating new believers;
7. in making possible continuing education opportunities for new and experienced pastors.

Our recent experiences have shown us more clearly than before that people value the preparation of dedicated, thoughtful, and compassionate leaders for the church. The partnership between congregations and AMBS is truly the work of and a gift from God.

Gayle Gerber Koontz is AMBS acting president and professor of theology and ethics. She came to AMBS in 1982 and served as dean from July 1990 through January 1995.

Mary E. Klassen

Gayle Gerber Koontz, acting president, and Willard M. Swartley, dean.

Listen and lead; lead and listen

Willard M. Swartley

The next decade presents to AMBS a distinctive challenge and a unique window of opportunity. Our goals for the future are to prepare men and women for effective and faithful ministry and mission, to advance vision and virtue, and develop character and competence for service of God's kingdom.

In its stance to the North American Mennonite church, AMBS will both listen and lead, lead and listen. We will find new ways to develop closer connections with our

(Continued on page 2)

Inside

What is your vision for AMBS? (continued)

President's Window

AMBS Panorama

What is your vision for AMBS?

Two members of the AMBS presidential search committee have been designated to lead a listening process in the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church. You may share your vision with Anne Stuckey, P.O. Box 1142, Elkhart, Indiana 46515-1142; or Vern Preheim, P.O. Box 347, Newton, Kansas 67114-0347.

Listen and lead; lead and listen

(Continued from page 1)

constituent conferences, make theological education available in a variety of formats, and thus seek to make theological education accessible to a larger number of people. We are committed to maintain strong rootage in biblical studies as well as Anabaptist-Mennonite history and theology, while at the same time respond to current interests in Christian spirituality, peace and justice, and evangelism and mission. We seek to be innovative and faithful, practical and pastoral in theological education.

Willard Swartley is AMBS dean and professor of New Testament, having come to AMBS in 1978.

Mary E. Klassen

"Today Christendom is in its death throws," Douglas John Hall, Canadian theologian, told students and faculty at AMBS.

In a series of lectures Feb. 22-23, Hall challenged listeners to see the decline "as a doorway to a future more in keeping with what our Lord had in mind when he called disciples to redeem the world through love, not power. We have an opportunity seldom seen in Christian history—to become salt, yeast, and light," the professor at McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, said, "But we must relinquish the centuries-old goal to be big and successful, to be the official religion of our culture. Our Lord's metaphors for his community of witness were all modest ones: a little salt, a little yeast, a little light."

In this way, the Christian movement can "recover something of the greater mission of Christ's church in the world," Hall believes.

Mary E. Klassen

James Longacre and John Friesen lead the AMBS board. While Marlin Miller was AMBS president, John, as a General Conference Mennonite Church representative, chaired the board, with James as vice chair. Now, as Gerald Gerbrandt comes to serve as interim president, James, representing the Mennonite Church, will become chair and John will serve as vice chair.

Convey the treasures

James Longacre

I expect AMBS carefully to host and cherish the church's rich memory. In teaching and community life, the seminary will seek to convey the treasures to each generation of students preparing for ministry. Those who have encountered the deep and marvelous themes of the faith will then preach and minister with the vision of the Kingdom stirring their hearts and minds.

I expect the seminary faculty and staff lovingly to brood over the church family as members strive daily to serve Christ faithfully in the complex settings of business and industry, home and office, classroom and hospital room.

I expect the church to value the seminary as a center of prayer and learning. In a restless and confused age, the efforts to clarify religious thought and the continuing vision to enrich the soul, deserve the prayerful and financial support of congregations everywhere.

James Longacre is pastor of Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa., and chair of the AMBS board.

Opportunity to listen

John J. Friesen

For the AMBS board, the months after Marlin Miller's death have been a time of grieving, of taking stock of the strengths of AMBS, and of planning for the future. The board is grateful for the strong leadership provided by the acting president, Gayle Gerber Koontz. It has become evident that the strengths of a committed faculty, of a strong program for training leaders, and of generous support from the constituency continue.

These strengths have been augmented by the appointment of a new dean, Willard Swartley, and of an interim president, Gerald Gerbrandt.

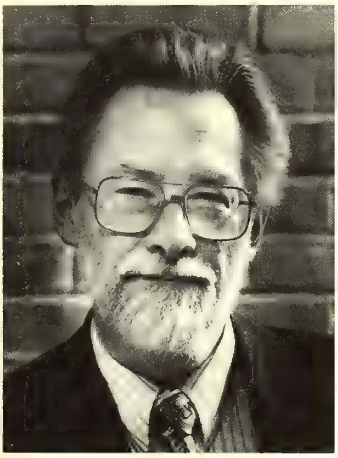
As AMBS searches for a new president, the board sees an opportunity to listen anew to the churches to see what you are saying about AMBS's future direction, emphasis and tone. The board is excited about the role that AMBS can continue to play in training strong leaders for the Mennonite community.

John J. Friesen is professor of history and theology at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man., and vice chair of the AMBS board.

Nurture and witness

Gerald Gerbrandt

Our world today desperately needs the church. It needs the church to be a community caring for and nurturing its own as well as a sign and witness—albeit imperfect—to larger society of what the kingdom of God is about. The mission of AMBS is to assist the church to be such a presence.



J. Tyler Klassen

Through systematic study of Scripture, tradition and society, through times of prayer and worship, through guided practice of ministry, and through fellowship and discipleship, AMBS endeavors to help men and women become effective and sensitive leaders for the church, and theologically perceptive lay people who represent Christ and the church in their daily vocation.

Gerald Gerbrandt will serve as interim president from July 1, 1995, to June 30, 1996. He currently is dean and associate professor of Bible at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man. He received a Master of Divinity degree from Mennonite Biblical Seminary in 1973.

Praying for renewal

Richard A. Kauffman

Several years ago I confessed in the AMBS chapel that, though I wanted to pray for the renewal of the church, I didn't have the courage.

First, I was afraid that nothing would happen. And second, perhaps I was even more fearful that renewal would happen which would force me to make some changes in my own life which are not comfortable.

Since then, this has become my prayer, however feeble it is: that the church will experience a renewal of Christ's Spirit among us; and that AMBS will play some small part in that renewal through the education and formation of church leaders who themselves have been transformed by Christ's Spirit.

The AMBS mission statement commits us "to pursue excellence in teaching and learning for renewing the church's worship, community life, and witness."

Whereas these three realms of church are interrelated—worship, community life, and witness, I believe that the renewal which is coming will be particularly marked by **witness**—a new sense of church identity as a missionary people, a commitment to being in the world, not of the world, yet for the world and its redemption.

Richard A. Kauffman is AMBS administrative vice president; he joined the AMBS leadership team in 1984.

Take a different kind of summer vacation

Summer school courses for all who want to grow in their faith

Biomedical Ethics
Joseph J. Kotva,
guest instructor
June 5-16, afternoon

Psalms
Ron Guengerich,
guest instructor
June 5-16, morning

Theology of the Gospels
Willard M. Swartley
June 19-30, afternoon

Worship: Ceremony, Symbol and Celebration
Marlene Kropf,
Mary Oyer,
June Alliman Yoder
June 19-30, evening

Conflict, Communication and Conciliation
John Paul Lederach,
guest instructor
June 23-30, weekend sessions and weekday morning

Creation and Spiritual Renewal
Perry Yoder
(Includes canoe trip; extra fees and special registration)
June 26-July 8

Jesus the Teacher
Daniel Schipani
July 10-21, evening

History of Christian Spirituality
Peter Erb,
guest instructor
July 10-21, morning

Reading a Greek Letter: I John (Introductory Greek)
Jacob Elias
August 1-25, morning

Call the AMBS registrar:

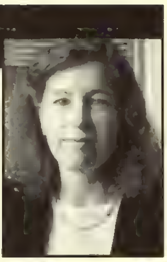
219 295-3726 or

1 + 800 964-2627

Mary E. Klassen

Ingrid Schultz (on the right), talks with Marlene Kropf, AMBS adjunct instructor in spiritual formation and worship, following a worship service during Pastors' Week, Jan. 30-Feb. 2. Ingrid, pastor of Communidad de Fe, a Hispanic Mennonite congregation in Chicago, explored the story of Jacob wrestling with God in her sermon for the third service of the week. With the theme, "Strangers No More," Pastors' Week focused on the church's mission of welcoming and the book of Genesis. Other preachers were Gary Harder, Scarborough, Ont., Charlotte Holsopple Glick, Goshen, Ind., and Jonathan Brown, Elkhart, Ind.

President's Window



Like the crew of a ship, the seminary board, administrators and faculty look ahead and plan carefully. The crew wants to know the direction the ship is headed—is it on course? They want to know someone is watching the water and weather so they can steer around reefs or storms. And they depend on charts and schedules to get them to ports for supplies and passengers.

Beginning in 1990, the "crew" at AMBS gave new and more thorough attention to overall seminary direction. With counsel from pastors and church leaders, educators, alumni, students and staff, a new purpose statement and goals were adopted. The purpose statement sets our direction. The goals help keep us on course.

In March 1995, following energetic and thoughtful discussion, the AMBS board affirmed several goals for the next three to five years. The seminary must move toward these goals if it is to continue to fulfill its purpose in preparing pastors, teachers, evangelists and other church leaders who are informed by Anabaptist-Mennonite convictions and committed to the Christian church's global mission. The most urgent of the goals are:

1. To work with the church in **promoting church vocations** and to increase the student body at AMBS.
2. To **build a stronger financial base** for the seminary.
3. To **develop new educational programs.** (Such as a summer institute in evangelism and missions, a certificate in ministry for people who cannot come to campus for extended periods of time, a doctor of ministry degree, a master of arts concentration in specialized ministries, and computer-based distance learning experiences. We are working now to set priorities for these.)

Among the legacies which Marlin Miller in his role as president left the seminary were initiation of this broadly based planning process and a foundational plan which, as it evolves through revision, continues to focus and guide decision-making. For these gifts the AMBS "crew" is grateful as the seminary moves into the seas ahead.

Gayle Gerber Koontz, acting president

The holocaust
Nuclear war
The Cold War
Peace movements
Conscientious objection
Ghandi
Bonhoeffer
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Nelson Mandela
Vaclav Havel

Explore the role of Christians and churches in the major moments of the 1900s in:

Nonviolence and Christian Faith in the 20th Century

New course taught by Walter W. Sawatsky, associate professor of church history.

Meets four weekends fall semester at AMBS. For details, call **1 + 800 964-2627.**

AMBS Panorama

Stewardship theme for Pastors' Week 1996

Pastors' Week next year will have a stewardship theme: "Living From Abundance: Pastoring From a Stewardship Perspective." Plan now to be on campus January 29-February 1 for the worship services, Bible studies, workshops and fellowship.

Interterm 1996

Offerings for January 8-26, 1996, are *I and II Samuel* with Mary Schertz; *Anabaptist History and Theology* with Myron Augsburger; *Congregational Spirituality* with Marlene Kropf and Marcus Smucker; *Spirituality for Urban Ministry* with Mary Thiessen; *Christianity and the Arts* with Mary Oyer; *Family Systems and Pastoral Care* with Terri Brenneman; and *Community, Mutual Aid and Stewardship* with Willard Swartley and Don Kraybill.

$6 million mark reached

The $6 million mark has been reached in the AMBS Partners for Ministry campaign, John Duerksen, campaign director, announced in March. The campaign will undergird the seminary's ongoing educational program and fund several special projects.

Weekend intensive courses

AMBS schedules one or two courses each semester in intensive weekend sessions so people from a greater distance may participate. The upcoming courses are: **Fall:** *Nonviolence and Christian Faith in the 20th Century* (see at left), and *Oral Interpretation in Worship Leading* with June Alliman Yoder. **Spring:** *Biblical Foundations of Peace and Justice* taught by Mary Schertz and Perry Yoder.

Former professor dies

J.C. Wenger, a Mennonite Church bishop and historian, died March 26, 1995, at his home in Goshen, Ind. Wenger taught at Goshen College from 1938 to 1969, and from 1969 to 1985 at Goshen Biblical Seminary, which is part of AMBS.

Chair to honor Marlin E. Miller

A chair in Mennonite Life and Thought is being created to honor Marlin E. and Ruthann Miller. Marlin was president of AMBS until his death Nov. 3, 1994. Gifts for the chair will support continued emphasis in making Mennonite faith relevant for the church's life and witness today.

Prayer request

Forty-one students plan to celebrate commencement on May 26. Pray for these people as they seek employment and future directions that will be new steps in responding to God's call.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Consulting editor: Richard A. Kauffman

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Gospel Herald, Mennonite Reporter, The Mennonite.

Spring 1995
Printed in U.S.A.

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News

Northern District cuts funds to mission church

Newton, Kan.—The Northern District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church will end its financial support of St. Paul (Minn.) Mennonite Fellowship effective June 1 because of the congregation's position of welcoming gay, lesbian and bisexual Christians as members.

The NDC home missions committee took the action March 18. In a letter to Helen Quintela, the fellowship's pastor, the committee stated that it felt the need "to uphold the standard of the larger Mennonite church on issues of faith and practice." The NDC executive committee affirmed the action March 24-25.

The decision to cut off funding to the church came after a March 3-4 meeting with the St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship. "We left with increased understanding among us, with a sense of goodwill and appreciation for the openness and candor exercised during the dialogue. We also left knowing that there are some basic differences among us, as well as differences among the congregations that conference leaders represent," said an NDC missions committee report in reference to the March 3-4 discussion.

As a mission church of NDC, the St. Paul congregation was budgeted to receive $7,200 this year. That figure was to drop by 10 percent each year until the church was fully self-supportive. Monthly installments on the $7,200 will end in May. The church

continued on page 14

Nigerian choir tour builds bridges

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Stereotypes were shattered last fall when an eight-woman choir from Jos, Nigeria, visited the predominantly African-American Lee Heights Community (Mennonite) Church in Cleveland.

Mennonite Central Committee sponsored the trip, which first included a tour of rural churches in Saskatchewan. The Nigerian women were apprehensive about visiting Cleveland, having heard disparaging stories about American blacks.

"Media coverage of African-Americans tends to be as negative as media coverage of African countries," says Nathan Beachy, a former MCC Nigeria worker and a member of Lee Heights.

For many at Lee Heights Community (Mennonite) Church, the week-long visit affirmed their heritage. Says one member, "Just by our physical similarities with the Nigerians, we knew we shared some past. ... Having a past does reflect on the present, and the present impacts the future."

"The value of the exchange is imprinted in our hearts," says choir member Hannatu Jugo. "Whenever I think about it I feel so thankful to God. Although we were from different cultures and countries, we are still one in Christ, the children of God."

Naomi Unger (MCC)

Singing across cultures: *The Nigerian women's choir Servant Singers worships with Lee Heights Community (Mennonite) Church in Cleveland. Left to right are Ruth Stephen, Elizabeth Dung and Asabe Anthony of Nigeria.*

Inside the news

CDC discusses sexuality, helps church recover from fire / p. 14

Scholars discuss role of church colleges / p. 16

Faith & Life Press staff member to finish responsibilities / p. 17

Taiwanese delegates share opinions about North American Mennos / p. 17

The Canadian International Development Agency announced a reduction of $565,000 in the amount of money Mennonite Central Committee Canada receives from the government for development assistance. The reduction lowers total assistance from $3.3 million to $2.7 million. MCCC plans to appeal the decision.

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With anticipation and a pinch of anxiety Mennonite World Conference's executive committee confirmed moving ahead with plans for a world conference in India in 1997. The committee's "tinge of anxiety" comes from the question of whether assemblygoers will be ready to enter a gathering with fewer amenities and more potential surprises than past assemblies. "God's world belongs not to five-star hotel people but to those who know what suffering means," Bishop D.C. Gorai of the Church of North India told the committee. "If you come with more concern about the deprivation of others than your own comfort, you will leave India enriched as partners in mission," he said. "Assembly 13 will be a different experience," said MWC president Raul Garcia. "We will learn a lot if we are willing to be flexible, respectful of one another as on a two-way street. ... We dream of being together in heaven; can we not seek to be together in Calcutta in anticipation?"

Mennonite Men president Burdell Roeschley presents a $24,000 check from the Tenth Man church building program to Luis E. Orozco, treasurer of the Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Amor (Community of Love Mennonite Church) in Philadelphia March 26. Mennonite Men gave the congregation $6,000 in 1994.

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Don Warner told how Mennonite Disaster Service taught him to laugh again. He spoke Feb. 10-11 at the annual MDS all-unit meeting in Saskatoon. Warner said his story began on Palm Sunday 1994, with the baptism of a new grandchild. Warner and his family were not concerned about the heavy rain as they left the church. That day his house in Georgia was lifted from its foundation and disintegrated. His wife was pinned under a felled oak tree and died. Warner decided to clear the property with the idea of renting it and moving to Ohio to be close to relatives. Depression and despair set in as he attempted to clean up. In June he drove past an MDS office in nearby Jasper and decided to stop. Several days later, a group of 10 young people had helped clear the debris. More importantly these MDS volunteers invited him to join them for singing, devotions and games of Dutch Blitz in the evening. He learned to laugh again.

currently supports a one-third-time pastor on a $17,000 annual budget.

Representatives of the Iowa-Nebraska Conference of the Mennonite Church also attended the March 3-4 meeting. That conference has budgeted $2,000 for the fellowship for the current fiscal year, which ends Aug. 1. The Iowa-Nebraska Conference could take action to change its support of the fellowship at conference council meetings May 11.

Members of the fellowship wore black on Sunday, March 19, as a sign of mourning. The congregation has been supported by NDC since its beginnings as a church plant 10 years ago.

"The decision was particularly painful in light of the honest and open conversation we had with the home missions committee only two weeks before," said Rafael Manrique, a deacon at St. Paul. "We put enormous emotional energy and prayerful preparation into this dialogue because we care about our relationship with the conference and wider denomination."

"It is tragic that the home missions committee would cut off a mission church that has endured in an inner-city neighborhood and witnessed to the peace of Christ," said Quintela. Quintela served as chair of the NDC home missions committee from 1986 to 1992.

The St. Paul fellowship is a member of the Supportive Congregations Network, a group of 27 General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Church of the Brethren congregations that welcome gay, lesbian and bisexual members. *Larry Penner with reports from Northern District Conference and the Supportive Congregations Network*

CDC discusses sexuality, helps church after fire

Normal, Ill. (GCMC)—The Central District Conference (CDC) discussed a statement on human sexuality and took an offering for a congregation whose meeting place burned to the ground during the conference sessions March 30-April 1.

Elsdon United Methodist Church in Chicago, the meeting place of Comunidad de Fe, burned to the ground in the early morning hours of April 1. The cause of the fire has not been determined. Comunidad de Fe's pastor, Ingrid Schultz, was at the conference when delegates heard the news the morning of April 1. Delegates prayed for the two congregations and took a love offering of over $2,000 for Comunidad de Fe. They also passed a resolution assuring Comunidad de Fe of their continuing prayer and financial support.

Discussion on human sexuality came when Ed King, pastor at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill., brought a resolution in the form of a proposed CDC Policy on Human Sexuality on behalf of his church and Congerville (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

The resolution was a near duplicate of a statement currently being considered in the Eastern District Conference. It expands on the statement adopted by the General Conference Mennonite Church at Saskatoon in 1986.

It would deny leadership credentials to leaders who "continue to advocate or practice [premarital, extramarital or homosexual sexual] conduct contrary to the Scriptures."

The resolution also expresses disapproval of "'convenantal relationships' or 'monogamous commitments' between persons of the same sex as being equivalent to marriage."

"We present this as a starting place," said King, calling for "openness for discussion on the basis of Scripture."

Delegates also received in their packets a working statement from the CDC executive council dated April 16, 1994, addressing the question of congregations that have allowed Christians into membership who are gay and lesbian.

That statement says that the CDC executive council believes that congregations that have accepted gay and lesbian people as members "were seeking God's will on this matter. ..." It also says "the decision to receive homosexuals as members is a departure from the conference norm at this time. When such a departure has appeared in past years (over other concerns such as the way of peace or gender equality) the conference has continued to include such congregations in fellowship." It recommends

- that all congregations continue in fellowship with the conference,
- that membership in local congregations is best discerned by the local congregation,

Larry Penner

Movement of worship: *Jane Thorley Roeschley, Flanagan, Ill., and Doug Reichenbach, pastor at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., present a dance of servanthood during worship at Central District Conference March 30-April 1.*

- that congregations concerned about the practice of other congregations send representatives to dialogue with those congregations and seek a redemptive solution,
- that if the matter cannot be resolved, congregations may bring matters to conference.

Myron Schrag, pastor at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., said he saw the working statement from the CDC executive council as sufficient for conference use. He said he did not see the need for the resolution.

George O'Reilly, pastor at Carlock (Ill.) Mennonite Church, questioned whether the resolution was an attempt to find "political solutions for relational problems."

He said conversation on these issues should be relational, not political: "If there is not 95 percent unanimity on a statement like this, it will be destructive."

Craig Maven, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., said he helped draft the resolution when he was a pastor in the Eastern District. He said the statement may not be right for CDC: "You need to ask if you do need this sort of a statement in your context."

Pastor James Schrag, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, offered a substitute motion. Recognizing that the resolution "was offered not to impose a viewpoint but as a request for dialogue within the CDC, we call upon the CDC board to invite congregations to a year-long evaluation of the questions raised in the document." The motion passed overwhelmingly.

Integration: CDC delegates endorsed an interim agreement with the area Mennonite Church (MC) conferences to further integration in the East Central States region. The agreement would form joint ministry regions as a beginning model for integration. CDC and the MC conferences would jointly search for and appoint regional ministers.

A report on a CDC listening process from new CDC president Larry Wilson said for many in CDC the greatest fear of integration comes from being outnumbered: "We have said to our sister MC conferences that we are ready to do more together, but they have to want us and what we have to offer ... and not just absorb us."

Farewell: CDC also said goodbye to conference minister Mark Weidner, who will end as conference minister April 30 to begin as conference minister for the (MC) Ohio Conference.

In his address on the conference theme, "Servant Congregations in a Changing World," Weidner spoke to the scriptural roots of servanthood, calling it "a central motif rather than a peripheral option of faith."

He said the hitch in service comes in "a sense that we are superior because of what we know or what we have to offer." He said the relationship of servanthood is "not one of over and under but walking alongside and serving one in need."

Despite the downfalls of congregations, he said, the church can be "the channel for the healing river of the Spirit to wash over us."

CDC also

- approved Ruth Naylor, associate pastor at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, as interim full-time conference minister, for 18 months beginning May 1, and approved Jane T. Roeschley, Flanagan (Ill.) Menno-

Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite Church is praying for five families to join the church in creating a nucleus of families with young children for community outreach. The church's address is 425-11 St. South, Lethbridge, AB T1J 2N9.

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A travel seminar Aug. 8-26 in Labrador will be sponsored by Conrad Grebel College and Mennonite Central Committee. The seminar, "Deep-Rooted Social Conflict: A Labrador Experience," will be led by Dean Peachey of Conrad Grebel and Sonia Bromley of MCC. Contact Peace and Conflict Studies, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6, (519) 885-0220, ext. 265.

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"Racism is a real problem ... it is something we need to deal with and work with," Carlos Romero told 145 Mennonite youth at a "Peace It Together" conference at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, March 10-12. The conference focused on racism. Romero challenged participants to be agents of reconciliation. "Racism is an injustice ... and any injustice has no place in the kingdom of God or in our lives."

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Christian Peacemaker Teams staff in the West Bank delivered a letter of concern to the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, an independent Christian organization. The letter criticizes the embassy's neglect of the tradition of biblical prophecy, its scare tactics aimed at encouraging Jews to immigrate to Israel, its slanted portrayal of Islam, its abandonment of Palestinian Christians and its failure to heed Jesus' call for peace and justice. The letter decries the "demonization of Muslims [which] makes it very difficult for Arab Christians to maintain good relationships with their Muslim neighbors."

"You don't need to change the world—just keep the world from changing you," activist and *Washington Post* columnist Colman McCarthy told Bluffton (Ohio) College students March 7 at a forum on "How to Radicalize Your Life—While There's Still Time." He said prayer isn't about asking for a better job but asking what God wants for you. "Prayer absent of risk is a 'gimme-ized' religion. Joy comes from taking risks to use your gifts."

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A new Academic Health Center officially opened its doors this semester at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. The center unofficially opened last fall as assistant professor of nursing Katherine Mick saw four to six students each day it was open who had heard about her services by word of mouth. The center was approved by the college's board of directors last fall and is located in the basement of Memorial Hall. Mick said she began noticing the need of students and faculty for health care when she came to Bethel in 1990. She has office hours two afternoons and one morning each week.

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A committee to seek new leadership for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., will carry out a listening process in the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church to shape a profile of the leadership needs. Although AMBS is incorporated as one seminary, the two seminaries that make up AMBS—Goshen Biblical Seminary (Mennonite Church) and Mennonite Biblical Seminary (General Conference)—still have ties to sponsoring church bodies. New leadership may develop in two ways. The first possibility is one person to serve as president of GBS and MBS. The second possibility is separate presidents for GBS and MBS, with one of the two serving as president of AMBS. The AMBS board indicated strong support for the first option. AMBS president Marlin E. Miller died unexpectedly on Nov. 3, 1994.

nite Church, as one-sixth-time interim conference minister to the Iowa and Missouri congregations and pastors for the same term,

- approved a 1995 budget of $291,565, up from the 1994 budget of $281,952 (CDC received $265,907 in 1994 and spent $262,215.),
- accepted Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church into CDC. The church came into existence Jan. 8 when First Mennonite Church (General Conference) and Northside Mennonite Church (Mennonite Church) merged. The church plans to become MC-affiliated as well. *Larry Penner*

Scholars discuss the role of the church college

Goshen, Ind. (*Gospel Herald*)—Jesus. That name was heard many times at a conference on "The Church and College in Partnership: A Vision for the Future" held at Goshen College March 23-26.

A listening committee summarized, "In a gathering that tends to be an academic conference, one doesn't often hear the name of Jesus spoken as often as it was here."

Keynote speaker Ernest Boyer set the stage for this focus by calling Mennonite colleges to emphasize the unique theological beliefs and traditions of the denomination. Boyer, now president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning, served as the U.S. Commissioner of Education under President Jimmy Carter.

"The church college must be infused with both the theological and the cultural traditions of its sponsoring church," Boyer said. It needs to communicate these to its students, not only through its curriculum but also in the kind of faculty and staff it hires.

Faith in Jesus: What are these theological traditions for Mennonites? "Calling people to a living faith in Jesus Christ," said Janice Yordy Sutter, pastor at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind., in a paper on integrating Anabaptist values into the program of Mennonite colleges.

"Building up people of faith—that's how I see the church and college being in partnership," Sutter said.

"We begin with a relationship with Jesus Christ," John D. Roth, associate professor of history at Goshen College, said in a presentation on "Strengthening the Church Through Higher Education."

Further, he said, "as church colleges, we must become visible advocates for the health and welfare of the local congregation."

To do that, faculty and staff must both affirm the denomination and become active participants themselves, said Owen T. Burkholder, pastor at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., and moderator-elect of the Mennonite Church.

Against history: Maintaining close college-church ties is not easy. History seems to be against it.

Albert Meyer, executive secretary of Mennonite Board of Education (MBE), noted that church schools were the only colleges and universities 200 years ago in North America. "Now only 9 percent of students are in schools that would have even a loose relationship with a church," he said.

"Church schools have tended to 'go public' as relationships weakened," Meyer said. He blamed the weakening on church leaders as much as on those running the schools.

> **"As church colleges, we must become visible advocates for the health and welfare of the local congregation."**
>
> ***John D. Roth***

"Church leaders have felt that schools were able to raise dollars as well as the church itself could," Meyer said. "They proposed cutting the schools from the church budgets and asked the schools to fend for themselves."

Joe Lapp, president of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., said, "What we need from the church is less governance. We will experience less financial support. What we need now is more advocacy."

"One of the most important statements we [colleges] can make to the Mennonite church is that we want to work together," said Shirley Showalter, professor of English at Goshen College.

"To express confidence in the church college is more an act of faith than one of experience," Boyer told the conference. He challenged Mennonites to continue modeling for North American higher education what he sees as strong church-college ties.

"What's missing in so much of Christian endeavor today is the vision of Jesus," Richard T. Hughes of Pepperdine University, Malibu, Calif., summarized at the close of the conference. "That is what the Mennonite uniqueness is about." *J. Lorne Peachey*

FLP staff member to end responsibilities

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Commission on Education executive secretary Norma J. Johnson has asked Dietrich Rempel, Hesston, Kan., to terminate his position as the director of production and finance for Faith & Life Press April 28. Rempel began his employment with FLP in 1963. FLP is publisher for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"Dick's dedication and commitment to publishing Christian education materials with an Anabaptist understanding is strong and deep. He considered the printing press to be his pulpit. The General Conference and other organizations have benefited from his years of service," said Johnson.

Johnson said that several FLP administrative positions were restructured in 1992. At that time, Rempel's job description was changed from production manager to director of production and finance.

"We find that we need to continually review and revise job descriptions," said Johnson. She noted that FLP is searching for a director whose primary responsibilities will be to oversee its financial operations.

During Rempel's tenure, FLP sales have increased from $292,068 in 1963 to $1,731,295 in 1994. He worked on a number of major projects, including *The Mennonite Hymnal* (1969), *Foundation Series* (1976), *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (1992) and *Jubilee: God's Good News* (1994).

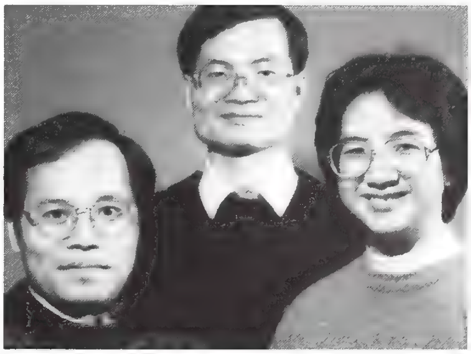
Prior to his employment at FLP, Rempel served as a member of the General Conference Board of Publication and Finance. He graduated from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, in 1956. He also completed an apprenticeship and journeyman training in printing.

Rempel and his wife, Mary, are members of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton.

Taiwanese guests share opinions of North Americans

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Taiwanese Mennonite Titus Liao drew a round of laughter at a plenary session of the 1995 Council of Commissions here when he noted that the North American board members were conscientious because they didn't skip out of the meeting to go shopping.

Liao was one of three representatives from the Taiwan Christian Mennonite Church to attend the annual business meeting of the General Conference Mennonite Church March 10-14.



Visitors: *Kim Chen (left), Titus Liao, Cherry Wu (right)*

The purpose of the visit was to foster the church-to-church relationship between the General Conference and the Taiwan Christian Mennonite Church, whose membership is about 1,200. The General Conference mission in Taiwan was dissolved in 1993.

Overall the three Taiwanese Mennonites were impressed with what they observed. "You have a strong, stable organization in which to work. People have a sense of responsibility and accountability," said Kim Chen, who pastors the Mei Lun Mennonite Church in Hualien together with his wife, Cherry Wu.

continued on page 18

The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.) board discussed three possible new programs at meetings in Newton, Kan., March 10-11. The board had earlier discussed a doctor of ministry degree program and now counseled that other programs may be more pressing. The board supported work on a program to train in-service leaders (deacons, elders and pastors) who have other part-time employment. Board members also approved exploring a summer institute for mission and evangelism. They approved a 1 percent salary increase for 1995-96 for staff.

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., hosted a workshop March 16-17 on gentle teaching of people with behavioral challenges. John McGee of Creighton University Medical Center, Omaha, Neb., presented the approach, which emphasizes unconditional love rather than what can become manipulation through behavior modification. "The approach," says Leroy Willems of the Mennonite Disabilities Committee, which co-sponsored the seminars, "underscores our understanding of how to relate to someone as a brother or a sister rather than as a client receiving services."

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Members of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) are encouraged to register for Wichita '95 by May 31 to receive a discount. Wichita '95 is the GC/MC joint convention to be held July 25-30. The deadline for reserving lodging through the Housing Bureau of the Wichita Convention and Visitors Bureau is May 31. After May 31, lodging must be reserved independently. The registration form includes a lodging request form listing options. All GC and MC congregations have received forms. For additional copies, contact the Mennonite Church General Board, 421 S. Second St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516-3423, phone (219) 294-7131, fax (219) 293-3977.

Bank employees in the United States steal 11 times more money than bank robbers, according to Laurence Barton, author of *The Enemy in the Workplace*. Banks are often reluctant to publicize or even prosecute embezzlers because they don't want to look incompetent. (*The Marketplace*)

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Larry Kehler, Commission on Overseas Mission secretary for Asia, presents a plaque to Hugh and Janet Sprunger in honor of their 40 years of service in Taiwan (1954-79) and Hong Kong (1980-92) at meetings in Newton, Kan., March 10-14. Upon returning to North America in 1992, the Sprungers continued with COM through 1994, speaking in churches about their experiences. They also began part-time work in Chinese ministries with the Commission on Home Ministries and the Resources Commission of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. The Sprungers attend Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

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Liao, who is the pastor of the Ho Ping Mennonite Church in Taichung, liked the level of participation. "There is more interaction. Everyone seemed to be responsive. People openly expressed their feelings," he said. "Our meetings tend to be more formal and reserved."

"We do not have as much freedom to speak—those who have the most authority have the most clout," said Chen, adding that "in other ways, the willingness to submit to the authority of a group is a good thing."

The quantity of resources surprised the three visitors. "In Taiwan, it is hard to get enough resources. We gather half the material and then the project stops. You have good devotional resources," said Wu.

"I would like to see a stronger relationship between education and mission, like you have with your Commission on Education," said Chen. "However, it is difficult for us to have that level of specialization."

They also liked the support for missions at the congregational and denominational level. Liao, who attended a local church service, said he was struck by how even the children were encouraged to give.

The fact that the General Conference has its own overseas mission program was appealing, according to Wu. "In Taiwan, we have to go looking for our own support if we want to be missionaries," she said. "Here, the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) calls the mission workers and supports them."

Liao noticed a difference in how the Taiwan Christian Mennonite Church and the General Conference approached funding: "If we don't have the money for a project, we still go ahead and pursue it because we believe the resources will become available. You set the budget first."

The Taiwanese Mennonite pastors expressed appreciation for the compassion they had felt from people during their visit. Liao was particularly moved that Jeannie Zehr, COM secretary for mission communications, had remembered his wife's prayer request from a visit she made to Taiwan six years ago. At that time, his wife had asked Zehr to pray that her mother and father would become Christian.

While Liao's in-laws haven't yet accepted Christianity, he was heartened by the fact that Zehr said she would continue to pray for their conversion. "I have felt your love," he said. *Carla Reimer*

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **Self-Help Crafts director of information and human resources** (Akron, Pa.). Qualifications: Christian faith commitment, church membership and commitment to nonviolent peacemaking; college degree; strong administrative, communication, management skills and experience. Applicants must have working knowledge of MCC and Self-Help goals and merchandise.

Interested people contact **Dwight McFadden, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151.**

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Bluffton College seeks an **assistant director for administrative computing**. The assistant director will report directly to the director of administrative computing with primary responsibility of implementing and managing a newly purchased CMDS administrative software program developed for an AS/400 computer. The assistant director will also train other college personnel in the use of the CMDS program. Degree in computer science required with some business experience preferred. Applicants should have training and experience on an AS/400 computer, with an aptitude for quick learning of the CMDS program. Interviewing of candidates will occur in May with appointment to the position in early summer. Women and minority candidates are especially welcome.

Please forward letter of application, résumé and three letters of reference to **Willis Sommer, Vice President of Fiscal Affairs, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817**. Bluffton College is an equal opportunity employer.

Christopher Dock Mennonite High School has the following full-time positions open for the 1995-96 school year: **director of guidance** and **math instructor**.

Send résumés or inquiries to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446-4398**.

Mennonite Central Committee (Alberta) invites applications for the position of **executive director**. Duties include program leadership and supervision, communication with the constituency, staff supervision and office administration. Starting date is negotiable but preferably no later than Jan. 1, 1996.

Please send applications, including résumés and salary expectations, and arrange for three letters of references to be sent directly, **by May 31**, to **M. Hunsberger, Personnel Committee, 8613—34 Ave. NW, Calgary, AB T3B 1R5; (403) 286-4613; e-mail: hunsberg@acs.ucalgary.ca**

Record

AMBS—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service
VORP—Victim Offender Reconciliation Program

DEATHS

Hillegas

David Hillegas, 67, Quakertown, Pa., died March 31. Hillegas had served as pastor at Saucon Mennonite Church, Coopersburg, Pa., from 1958-1993, and as part-time Eastern District conference minister since 1983. The funeral service was held at East Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, April 4.

Risingsun

Ted Risingsun, 68, Busby, Mont., died April 5. Risingsun had been an active member of the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council. He served as MILC staffer for Montana and was a Northern Cheyenne tribal council member. The funeral service was held at White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church in Busby.

Wenger

John C. Wenger, 84, died March 26. A theology professor and Bible translator, he taught at Goshen (Ind.) College and at AMBS in Elkhart, Ind. He wrote on Mennonites for the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* and for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and *Encyclopedia Americana*. He also helped prepare the New International Version of the Bible.

MINISTERS

Bertsche Johnson

Janeen Bertsche Johnson has resigned as associate pastor at Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kan., effective in July. She will be campus minister and director of continuing education at AMBS, Elkhart, Ind.

James Richie is retiring from ministry and the pastorate at Calvary Church, Liberal, Kan.

Cleo Koop, Newton, Kan., will begin as pastor at Holly Grove Church, Somerset, Md., this summer.

WORKERS

Sheri Bartel, First Church, McPherson, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Feb. 3 as a teacher's aide at the Edgewood Children's Center in St. Louis.

Jesse Corwin, Erb Street Church, Waterloo, Ont., began a two-year MVS term Jan. 7 with VORP in Fresno, Calif.

Alfred and **Anne Heinrichs**, West Abbotsford (B.C.) Church, began a two-year MVS term March 6 in Wichita, Kan. Alfred is working as a grant writer with a peace center, and Anne is serving as a nurse with Methodist Urban Ministries.

Randy Nyce, Immanuel Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., began a six-month MVS term Jan. 13 as a teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Lela Mae Sawatzky, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., is part-time secretary for the Commission on Education's children's editor.

Trevor Siemens, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, began a one-year MVS term Nov. 15 with VORP in Fresno, Calif.

Bartel

Corwin

Alfred Heinrichs

Anne Heinrichs

Nyce

Siemens

A letter from the Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.) urges Trinity Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill., to remain in fellowship in the Illinois Mennonite Conference of the Mennonite Church. Trinity Church has said it will withdraw from the conference if no action is taken at the conference's April sessions concerning Oak Park (Ill.) Mennonite Church, which grants membership to gay and lesbian people. In a letter printed in the conference's newsletter, *The Missionary Guide*, representatives from Normal church wrote, "While recognizing your 2 1/2 years of deliberation on this matter, we feel that resolution of this issue in a Spirit-led fashion, as opposed to a time-driven deadline, is still in the future. ... We are urging you as a sister congregation to reconsider your decision to abstain from conference involvement until this issue is resolved. We urge you to continue to be an active participant as together we all seek to be led by the Holy Spirit." (*The Missionary Guide*)

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Local Mennonites and other activists tried to stop it, but the Salem, Ore., public school system will have a Reserve Officer Training Corps pilot program starting this fall. ROTC opponents rallied behind the leadership of Salem Mennonite Church member Cy Smith, a Vietnam War veteran and former Green Beret. The group appeared before the Salem school board Feb. 28. Smith pointed out that in 1972 the school board rejected ROTC, a decision that was published in a nationally circulated booklet to help school boards critically review the program. But at a March 14 meeting, the Salem school board decided to continue implementing ROTC, scheduled to start this fall. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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Correction: Dave Bergen was installed at Grace Church, Steinbach, Man., not Steinbach Church, as reported April 11.

Anne Heinrichs

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks a faculty member to teach **theology and church history**, specializing in Anabaptist history and theology. This is a full-time, continuing employment track position. Qualifications include Ph.D. or equivalent, pastoral or missionary experience, teaching experience and present active membership in a Mennonite or closely related Believers' Church congregation. Teaching areas include Anabaptist history and theology, systematic theology and possibly the early church. Position begins July 1, 1996. Application deadline: **May 30, 1995**.

Send application and résumé, with three references (academic, teaching and pastoral) to **Willard M. Swartley, Dean, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.** AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

The **Family Life Resource Center** provides a broad spectrum of services and is looking for an **adult psychiatrist** to round out a treatment team. The center presently has a child psychiatrist, a clinical psychologist, two clinical social workers and two professional counselors.

Send inquiries to **Family Life Resource Center, 2102 Port Republic Road, Suite C, Harrisonburg, VA 22801; 1-800-655-2055, or (703) 434-8450; fax (703) 433-3805.**

Mennonite Memorial Home, a retirement community with 160 residents, is looking for a **director of resource development**. Responsibilities include developing charitable giving through personal contacts, mailings and special events. Other job duties related to creating brochures and publications. Experience in fund development and a bachelor's degree are required.

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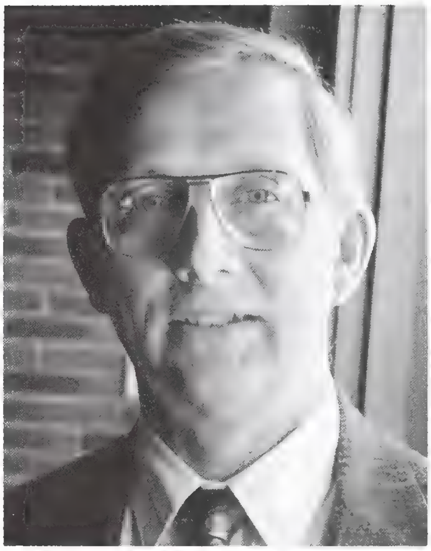

Erick J. Sawatzky, D.Min., director of field education, assistant professor of pastoral ministry

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Growing up on a Saskatchewan farm, Erick Sawatzky did not intend to become a pastor or professor. His experiences in college, at AMBS and in a congregational internship helped him hear God's call. Now, as he links student interns with congregations, they have opportunities to find new excitement for ministry.

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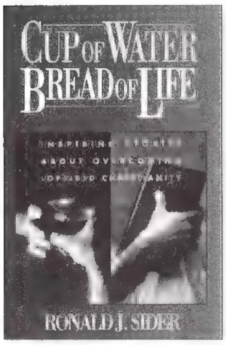
Reviews

BOOKS

CHANGE YOUR CHURCH

Cup of Water, Bread of Life: Inspiring Stories about Overcoming Lopsided Christianity *by Ronald J. Sider (Zondervan, 1994, 186 pages)*

Reviewed by Leonard Nolt, Boise, Idaho


CUP OF WATER BREAD OF LIFE
INSPIRING STORIES ABOUT OVERCOMING LOPSIDED CHRISTIANITY
RONALD J. SIDER

Ron Sider's latest book is an enthusiastic account of miraculous happenings in the contemporary church. In *Cup of Water, Bread of Life*, which is a companion volume to *One-Sided Christianity: Uniting the Church to Heal a Lost and Broken World*, the reader is treated to a detailed look at the work of several effective growing churches, churches that are much more than simply a group of people meeting regularly for worship.

These churches are antidotes to the "lopsided" Christianity so prevalent in today's world. Lopsided Christianity is Christianity that refuses to care for the whole person. Lopsided Christianity either meets the spiritual needs and ignores other needs, or else it's a social gospel with no spiritual focus.

The title is right. These stories of living, holistic Christianity are life-giving and inspiring. They encourage readers to dream of what might happen at their own congregations if the Holy Spirit is switched to full throttle.

Here we get a glimpse of the potential of each congregation. In these stories, which take the reader around the globe, souls are saved and cities and neighborhoods changed by the gospel. The churches involved are flexible and able to respond to the needs of many different groups of people. Some provide temporary housing, food, legal aid, job training and adult education. Others try to meet the needs of target groups such as artists, single mothers, street children or small businesses in need of loans. All engage in evangelism, but the emphasis is on friendship evangelism.

Cup of Water, Bread of Life demonstrates how it's possible to love people into the kingdom of God. This book could be a catalyst for change in your congregation and is not recommended for churches that want to remain the same.

A LIFE AMONG MENNONITES

En Route: The Memoirs of Henry J. Gerbrandt *by Henry J. Gerbrandt (CMBC Publications, 1994, 314 pages)*

Reviewed by Henry Poettcker, Winnipeg

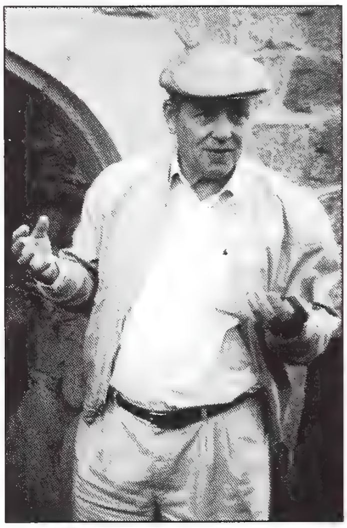
In this record of his life's journey, Henry Gerbrandt, a veteran church worker of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, gives us his memoirs. From the Red River flatlands of Lowe Farm, Man., where the journey begins, he takes us up to Cross Lake (northern Manitoba), to Mexico for a three-year missionary term, then back to Manitoba to pick up pastoral and conference administrative duties for more than 40 years. In this context come the assignments that take him to Europe, to South America and again to Mexico.

For many readers, Gerbrandt's earlier history of the Manitoba Mennonites, *Adventures of Faith* (1970), will serve as a backdrop for this more personal story. A member of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church, he played a significant role: as local pastor, as mission worker, as secretary of the Bergthaler mission outreach Mennonite Pioneer Mission, and as a member of the "Lehrdienst" (ministerium), setting the direction for shifting church polity and the larger conference affiliation.

Gerbrandt's answer to his children's query "Why write this book?" was simple: "To tell the story. To let the grandchildren know who we are." Daughter Elaine, writing the preface on behalf of all the children, reflects some of the new understanding that has come to them as they grasp some of the emotional trauma their father went through as he tells the story behind the facts and events of his (and their) life's journey.

These memoirs leave their impressions of a man whose spiritual quest was intense. In the unfolding of that quest there were many questions: the meaning of self-worth, when feelings of inadequacy were often there; misunderstanding by co-workers, when the best intentions were there; the path of the journey becoming quite different from the anticipation.

Throughout the entire story, Susan,



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Gerbrandt's wife, plays her significant role, and Henry is quick to acknowledge that for 50 years this is *their* story. (They celebrated their 50th anniversary in 1994.)

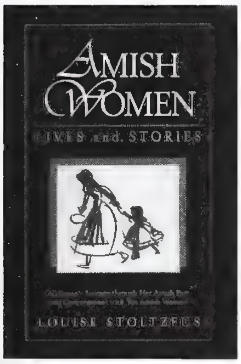
The author is to be commended for the candor with which he tells the story. At the same time the question wants to surface: What details in this personal presentation, perhaps detrimental to those who were partakers of the experiences (or perhaps their families), might have better been left unwritten? However one answers, here are memories that will grip the reader to the end.

EXCEPTIONAL AMISH WOMEN

Amish Women: Lives and Stories *by Louise Stoltzfus (Good Books, 1994, 122 pages)*

Reviewed by Laura Ann Schrag, Newton, Kan.

In this empathetic work, Louise Stoltzfus introduces us to nine Amish women who, despite their diversity of interests, all reflect their Amish roots. This diversity is first seen in the author's grandmothers; then in Susie, an artist; Rebecca, a single woman with a career in medicine; Linda, also single but giving much of her life to aging parents; Esther, whose loss of two children is compensated as she reaches out to those who hurt; Naomi, whose favorite author is C.S. Lewis; and the author's mother.



As the reader "sits in" on the interviews and/or day-to-day relationships the author has with each of the women, details of Amish life, such as the importance of the celery patch to an upcoming wedding, appear. Linda shows us the grace with which Amish accept the care of their aging parents. She has found time to visit Europe via the Queen Elizabeth 2. Such trips and her work at a local restaurant put her "into the world," but she is careful to guard against becoming "of the world."

Rebecca, a teacher turned medical assistant to a genetics researcher, still finds her "oasis" in the extended family. Though not married, she loves children: "What I care about is keeping children well."

Since I hold my own Amish roots to be positive, I was gratified to see Louise Stoltzfus skillfully show how these lives impinge with such "transcendent benevolence" on those around them.

Resources

- **A Peace Pole** and story cards are in the latest children's project packet for the General Conference Mennonite Church. Churches received these packets in March. Additional packets are available for free. Call the GC communications office, (316) 283-5100.
- **Cambodia: Land of Beauty but Uncertainty** is a 13-minute video telling of the life, culture and religious traditions of Cambodia. It also looks at the church in Cambodia and MCC's work there. For free loan from your nearest MCC office; for purchase at $20 U.S./$25 Cdn. from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501.
- **Border Crossing: A Spiritual Journey** by Katie Funk Wiebe (Herald Press, 1995, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.) is an inspirational guide for people approaching retirement.
- **Black Spider Over Tiegenhof** by James D. Yoder (Herald Press, 1995, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.) is a fictional account of Mennonites in Nazi Germany.
- **Great Promotion and Publicity Ideas for Youth Ministry** by Les Christie (Zondervan, 1994, $12.99 U.S.) offers tips for reaching students, parents, the community, volunteers and the pastor.
- **Junior High Talksheets: Psalms and Proverbs** by Rick Bundschuh and Tom Finley (Zondervan, 1994, $12.99 U.S.) contains 50 discussion starters for use in Sunday school, youth group or Bible study.
- **Great Retreats for Youth Groups** by Chris Cannon (Zondervan, 1994, $12.99 U.S.) provides 12 ideas for youth retreats, including outdoor adventure, discipleship, leadership development and peer counseling.
- **Developing Spiritual Growth in Junior High Students** by Ray Johnston (Zondervan, 1994, $14.99 U.S.) is a step-by-step program to guide junior highers into spiritual maturity.
- **Facing Your Future: Graduating Youth Group with a Faith that Lasts** by Laurie Polich (Zondervan, 1994, $49.99 U.S.) is a kit including leader's guide, three student handbooks and 34-minute video, to help high school seniors set goals for the future.
- **Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks** by Wayne Rice (Zondervan, 1994, $12.99 U.S.) is a collection of 100 attention-getting stories, parables and anecdotes by such speakers as Tony Campolo, Mike Yaconelli and others.
- **A Word in Season: Perspectives on Christian World Missions** by Lesslie Newbigin, edited by Eleanor Jackson (Eerdmans, 1995, $14.99 U.S.), is a collection of Newbigin's writings on missiology.
- **Self, Struggle and Change: Family Conflict Stories in Genesis and their Healing Insights for Our Lives** by Norman J. Cohen (Jewish Lights Publishing, 1995, $21.95 U.S.) teaches new ways of understanding ourselves and our families.
- **Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary** (Zondervan, 1994, vol. 1 $35.99 U.S., vol. 2 $32.99 U.S.) is an abridged version of the 12-volume *Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Contains maps, charts, table and pictures.
- **Survival of the Fittest: Keeping Yourself Healthy in Travel and Service Overseas** by Dr. Christine Aroney-Sine (MARC Publications, 1994, $9.95 U.S.) helps readers maintain physical, emotional and spiritual well-being while ministering internationally.
- **Healing the Children of War**, edited by Phyllis Kilbourn (MARC Publications, 1994, $21.95 U.S.), is a handbook for ministry to children who have suffered deep traumas.
- **No More Lone Ranger Moms: Women Helping Women in the Practical Everyday-ness of Life** by Donna Partow (Bethany House, 1995, $8.99 U.S.) calls for interdependence, not independence, among mothers.
- **Regathering: The Church from "They" to "We"** by Esther Byle Bruland (Eerdmans, 1995, $14.99 U.S.) explores ecumenism today.

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Editorial

A lesson from the Central District on homosexuality

There it is. That word that like no other sets Mennonites on edge. Say it and watch the fatigue surface in the eyes of anyone who has been a part of the arguments among us during the past 10 years.

The issue of homosexuality came to the Central District Conference (CDC) floor when two congregations brought a resolution on human sexuality for discussion (see page 14). While addressing more than homosexuality, the resolution made specific points about the sinfulness of homosexuality, points that struck a nerve in Central District.

The dialogue began. I stood with notepad and pen ready to record the bitter accusations and counteraccusations to report to you. That is not what I got.

Unexpected grace: Instead, delegates thanked the bringers of the recommendation for calling CDC to talk honestly about differences in the conference. Rather than trying for a quick yes/no solution, delegates raised constructive questions. They asked about the role of conference vs. the role of the individual congregation. Should questions of individual membership be left to individual congregations? How should churches in the conference work together when they disagree? How do scriptural interpretation and study happen (or not happen) in the conference? What actions or beliefs are grounds for taking away church membership or ministerial credentials?

> I stood ready to record the bitter accusations. That is not what I got.

Wisdom was evidenced as well in a "Working Statement on CDC Polity" from the CDC executive council. That statement acknowledged the disagreement among CDC churches and expressed the council's belief that all the churches were seeking God's will to the best of their ability. The statement said both that the decision to receive homosexuals is a departure from the conference norm and that in times of disagreement "we can learn from our differences and grow to a deeper unity in Christ."

The document models a Matthew 18 approach to solving disputes. It begins by affirming unity and recommending that all congregations continue in fellowship. It suggests that when a church has concerns about another congregation it go directly to that congregation to talk and to "seek a redemptive solution." If this loving dialogue fails, the congregations can bring the matter to the conference leaders and perhaps finally to the whole conference.

The discussion at CDC reminded me of Matthew 18 in another way. Christ's teaching on disputes began with a question of pride: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matthew 18:1). Jesus knew that pride too often leads to mishandled conflict. Delegates at CDC responded to each other out of humility and respect.

In the worst-case scenario of Matthew 18:17, when a member refuses to listen to the church, Jesus calls the church to treat that one as a gentile and a tax collector. And how did Jesus treat the gentiles and tax collectors? In the case of worst conflict, Jesus calls us to the most determined love.

Determined love: I saw determined love at CDC. I saw members willing to speak clearly about their disagreements without rejecting each other. I saw people able to see the complexity of issues involved, rather than falling prey to reactionary stances in the face of a tough issue.

The debate and strong feelings over homosexuality will not go away soon, nor should they. Our denomination should take this lesson from CDC: Confront a difficult issue by treating each other with love and respect. We can also learn from CDC not to simplify a complex issue. The lack of clarity on what justifies the expulsion of a church leader or entire congregation shows that we have homework to do on the responsibilities of congregation vs. conference. Other conferences would be wise to study the CDC executive committee's statement for their possible use.

God may be testing our ability to determine the right or wrong on this issue. I am sure God is testing our ability to handle conflict in the ways Christ taught. May we follow Christ's model of servanthood and sacrificial love as we allow the Spirit to guide us to unity. *Larry Penner*

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Inside

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In search of the water of community / p. 13

Fighting the 'big monster' / p. 14

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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The CHURCH: a place for HEALING

- To be a place of healing (see page 3)
- 'We need more than therapy' (see page 5)
- Healing the sin in our midst (see page 8)

Prologue

During the past several years *The Mennonite* and other Mennonite magazines have reported cases of sexual abuse by church leaders. Some people have criticized us for being so negative and seemed to think we enjoyed such reporting. In fact, we struggled with the need to be truthful and the desire to build up the church.

People asked, Why don't you report positive, healing stories? We replied, We want to, if we can find them. Now we have.

Inside this issue you may read about two congregations that have tackled the problem of sexual abuse and how to bring healing. One congregation (see pages 3-6) has become a place where survivors of sexual abuse can at least be heard. Another (see page 8) dealt with a situation in which both the perpetrator and the survivor were in the same congregation.

Both churches testify that trying to bring healing to sexual abuse survivors is a difficult task for which there seem to be no quick solutions. But they encourage us all by their example to at least try.

Isaac Block, a pastor who has worked with sexual abuse survivors, brings his insights to the question of when to forgive (see page 12).

Liz Hay Kaethler offers a new way to read the story of Jesus and the woman at the well (see page 13).

And read about Ricardo Pinzon and his work for peace in his native Colombia (see page 14). *gh*

Next issue: What do we do with money?

Cover: Illustration by Robert Hodgell

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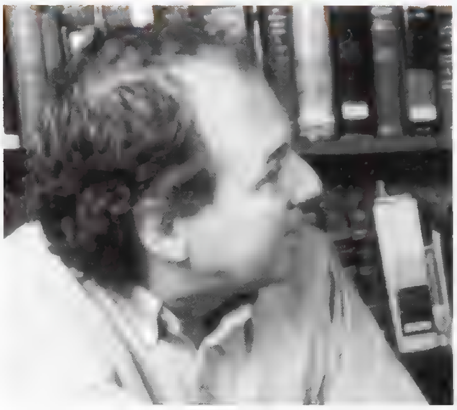

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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The goal of being a place of healing is not easy to achieve, but this congregation is making an attempt.

To be a place of HEALING

Gordon Houser

In the past five years a growing number of Mennonite women as well as several men have identified themselves as survivors of sexual abuse. Many of the women have come forward with their stories at one of a series of conferences on abuse, often sponsored in part by Mennonite Central Committee Women's Concerns. Yet few of them have tried to share their stories with their congregations.

Because of the intensity of the subject, people don't always know how to respond.

One congregation that has made attempts to listen to the stories of sexual abuse survivors is East Goshen Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. Interest in the subject coalesced in March 1993, when several from the congregation attended a conference on abuse, held in Normal, Ill.

On the following Sunday, during a sharing time in the morning service, several talked about their experiences at the conference. A month later, at the morning service on Palm Sunday, Dawn Bontrager-Lehman, a survivor of incest who had told her story at a couple of conferences, now told it to the congregation.

Dawn had talked earlier with David Miller, who was co-pastor at EGMC until the summer of 1993, when he left for Hesston (Kan.) College, where he teaches Bible and pastoral ministry. Newly sensitized to abuse issues after attending a conference in February 1992 for men working to end violence against women, David asked Dawn to respond as a survivor to his sermons. "This was very validating," Dawn says. "It meant a lot to me."

Later Dawn led a group in the church for abused women. The more she talked at EGMC about abuse issues, however, the more she felt boxed in, labeled "an angry feminist." Yet she kept on, believing God gave her emotions. Her anger, she says, is a fuel that gives her energy to work on her own and others' healing.

Co-pastors David Miller and Bob Keener tried to prepare the congregation for hearing Dawn's story at the Palm Sunday service. Having had others already stand up and say that they were survivors of abuse was important, says Bob. "Broader awareness was critical."

Purple ribbons: Because of the intensity of the subject, people don't always

"The church should be a safe place for survivors of sexual abuse."
Bob Keener

know how to respond, he says. "So we gave directions." These included letting people know two weeks ahead that this would be the focus. Some did not want their children to hear it. The church also had a team of people ready to respond, with "safe rooms" available for anyone needing to talk about their own issues afterward. (This team of people wore purple ribbons to identify themselves.) As part of the service, Marcella Hershberger talked about how to respond to such stories and provided suggestions for showing support (see box on this page).

In the days following this service, several others came to the pastors to tell their stories of abuse.

As a follow-up six months later, the church held a Sunday evening service at which Dawn shared what it was like for her to tell her story. She said she felt affirmed, that people responded positively, though some only said they were impressed that she wasn't angry. But after a couple of weeks, she said, there was silence, which was difficult. "There are people who have not spoken to me since then," she says.

Back in 1991, EGMC members had adopted a vision statement, which included a call for ministry groups. Betty Jane Helrich, a survivor who had begun attending the church in 1990, met with David Miller in March 1993 to talk about how to support abuse survivors. Out of this came an abuse resource group, which planned the Sunday evening service.

Betty Jane describes that service, to which more than 100 came—four times the usual number for Sunday evenings—as "one of the most powerful experiences of my life," as she and others told their stories and people listened.

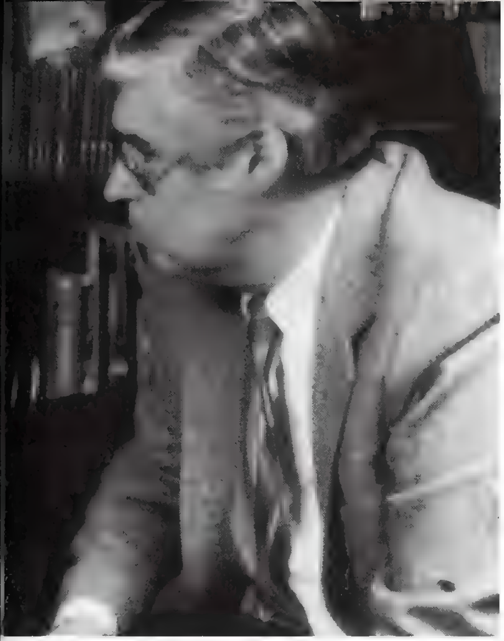
As a group of people in EGMC continues to meet to discuss abuse issues, a "we-they" dynamic has developed between survivors and non-survivors, says Betty Jane. Mary Grove, one of the pastors at EGMC, addressed this dynamic last May in a sermon. She described two people talking over their back fence and trying to understand each other. What each of them needs to do is look in the other's backyard, she said, in order to understand better where each is coming from.

Forgiveness: Last October another Sunday evening service focused on forgiveness, showing the video *After Sexual Abuse* (Mennonite Central Committee, 52 minutes), in which Vicki Dyck, a storyteller and actress from Saskatchewan, tells two stories

Suggestions for showing support

Marcella Hershberger provided these suggestions to members of East Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., in April 1993.

- Educate yourself about abuse. Be willing to hear how abuse affects a survivor's relationship with herself or himself, members of the same and opposite sex, parents, children, society, church and God. Learn about the healing journey for survivors. Read from the resource list (see page 7).
- Risk thinking about society, church, God from a survivor's point of view.
- Wear a purple ribbon on several Sunday mornings throughout the year to show survivors in this congregation that you support them in their individual healing journeys. Wear the ribbon to show that you commit yourself as a part of this congregation to a corporate healing journey that includes each person within this congregation, whether a victim, a perpetrator, a bystander or an advocate.
- If you know a survivor, ask what would be supportive at this point in her or his healing journey. Different types of support are needed at different points in the healing journey.
- Listen, listen, listen and listen some more in a nonjudgmental way.
- Respect the survivor's need to be alone. It is also part of the healing journey.
- Honestly affirm survivors. Share affirmations with her or him verbally or through a note.
- Offer to baby-sit, cook a meal or relieve the responsibilities at church or home, so that a survivor can have time to work on the healing journey.
- Send flowers or a small gift and say you care.



Skjold Photographs (for illustration only)

about an incest survivor's struggles to deal with her abuse. This spring an elective Sunday school class plans to study *Family Violence: the Compassionate Church Responds* by Melissa A. Miller (Herald Press, 1994).

Trying to deal with sexual abuse has not been easy for EGMC. Many grow weary of hearing it talked about. But the healing process is long, says Bob Keener. It's important for pastors to focus on how we walk with survivors, he says, to give them space. Survivors need autonomy, since pastoral care can feel like control. He says he's thankful for those survivors who are willing to be in the church. "The church should be a safe place for survivors of sexual abuse," he says.

Betty Jane says that survivors get weary, too. The grieving process seems to go on and on. Some grow tired of listening, she says, but they still need to listen.

How does healing work? "It takes the rest of your life," says Dawn. "Like an alcoholic, you have to keep facing it." Different things trigger flashbacks or pain, she says.

Betty Jane describes abuse as having your personhood violated. "It's like my soul was murdered," she says.

One thing that can trigger pain for women who have been abused by men is the predominantly male language used in most worship settings. In the spring of 1993, EGMC began an early service in response to a need for a different style. This service has its own worship planning committee, says Bob. It tends to be more liturgical, yet also more intimate because of its size. It has also experimented more

'We need more than THERAPY'

Margie Davis and Jane Leatherman each began attending East Goshen Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., because of its welcoming of sexual abuse survivors.

Margie grew up in the United Methodist Church. About five years ago she began dealing with her childhood sexual abuse, but she did not feel support from the church. She was told not to share her story with the congregation "until you're on the victory side."

She felt her image of God needed to be larger than that of "father." In her Sunday school class she challenged the use of only male language for God, but other women put her down.

Eventually she became involved in a network of abuse survivors and visited a number of churches. A friend told her about East Goshen Church. She finds the worship there "wonderful," especially its use of inclusive language.

Jane was involved for many years with a Mennonite congregation, but when she began talking about her childhood sexual abuse, people there said she was "falling away." She wrote a letter to the congregation about her experience and met other survivors. One woman she met had told people in the church about her abuse by her father, but the people believed the father's side of the story.

A group of women who felt they needed support began a women's Sunday school class, but they did not go through regular channels, and others felt threatened, says Jane, particularly the mother of one survivor. The class felt good to Jane, but then a couple of years ago a woman came to the class and criticized Jane after she had talked about feeling abandoned as a child.

"I felt beaten over the head with the Bible," Jane says. "When the bell rang to end the class, this woman hugged me and said, 'I love you,'" says Jane, and it felt condescending.

Gradually many of the women in that class left the congregation, and Jane began attending East Goshen Church. Jane likes the early service there. "It's geared toward children, which I appreciate." Her husband did not want to leave the other congregation, but he did.

Others have told these women to "forgive and forget," but that's difficult. "I'm in a healing process," says Margie. A few weeks earlier the pastors had invited people to come forward to be anointed for healing. "I didn't feel comfortable with that," says Margie, "but later, in the Sunday school class, I went forward to be anointed."

Both Margie and Jane say they need more than therapy. The church has been the context of their abuse, and they need the church to be the context of their healing. "The church's silence [about sexual abuse] hurts not only survivors but perpetrators as well," says Jane. *Gordon Houser*

> ***"What would it be like if we were comfortable with our sexuality? What would it be like for men and women to relate in healthy ways?"***
>
> **Dawn Bontrager-Lehman**

with using inclusive language. (See the story at right.)

The pastoral role is important in a congregation being a healing environment for survivors of abuse, says Bob. Betty Jane and Dawn agree. "Don't minimize the role of pastoral leadership," says Betty Jane. Dawn credits David Miller for her not leaving the church long ago. "I felt safe with him to speak freely," she says. "He didn't judge me, but he wasn't afraid of me either."

What keeps Dawn and others in church, where many of them have felt further wounded by people's silence and unwillingness to listen? "If we all leave, nothing will change," says Dawn. She dreams of a church that is a place of healing: "What would it be like if we were comfortable with our sexuality? What would it be like for men and women to relate in healthy ways?" She can't stop speaking and working with survivors while women are still being abused.

The work, the healing, never stops. The goal of being a place of healing is not an easy one to achieve. East Goshen is one congregation that is making an attempt, and the rest of us can learn from them.

Gordon Houser is editor of The Mennonite.

How the CHURCH can help prevent ABUSE

1. Clearly preach that violence—physical or emotional—is sin.
2. Model healthy male/female relationships and sexuality. (Men teaching children's classes is one example.)
3. Teach equality, not patriarchy.
4. Address issues of violence in premarital counseling and have a plan in case it happens.
5. Intervene the first time violence occurs—don't look the other way or consider it a private affair. (It will surely continue or escalate.)
6. Have a church policy/plan/structures in place for dealing seriously and redemptively with all caught in the cycle of domestic violence.
7. Build children's self-esteem.
8. Combat/counterbalance the unhealthy influences of pornography, drugs, alcohol, pressure for early sex, and violence that our children face daily.
9. Be willing to listen, nonjudgmentally, to another's story.
10. Continue to learn about domestic violence. Know the warning signs:
    - unexplained bruises/excuses
    - sunglasses, long sleeves in hot weather
    - lack of concentration, edginess
    - isolation
    - jealousy/"reporting in" to partner
    - absences
    - women looking at husband before speaking
    - pregnancy (abuse often begins during this time)

    Know referral sources, e.g., a local women's shelter.
11. Use the spiritual resources of prayer and the Holy Spirit on behalf of victims and abusers. *From the abuse resource group at East Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.*

RESOURCES for moving toward healing from sexual abuse

Books

A Hunger for Healing by J. Keith Miller (Harper, 1992)

A New Beginning: Daily Devotions for Women Survivors of Sexual Abuse by the Samaritan Counseling Center (Thomas Nelson, 1992)

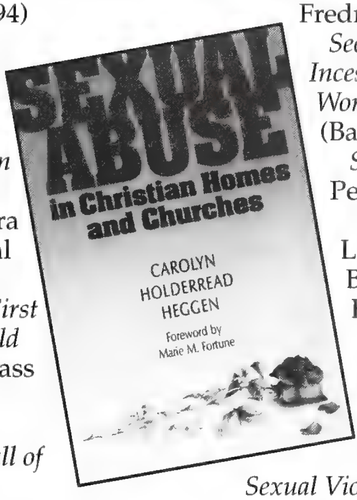
A Safe Place: Beyond Sexual Abuse by Jan Morrison (Shaw, 1990)

A Secret That's Never Been Told by Tracy Hansen (Twenty-Third Publications, 1992)

A Thousand Acres by Jane Smiley (Knopf, 1992)

A Winter's Song by Jane A. Keene (Pilgrim Press, 1991)

A Woman's Guide to Spiritual Renewal by Nelly Kaufer and Carol Osmer-Newhouse (Harper, 1994)


SEXUAL ABUSE
in Christian Homes and Churches
CAROLYN HOLDERREAD HEGGEN
Foreword by Marie M. Fortune

Abused Boys: The Neglected Victims of Sexual Abuse by Mic Hunter (Fawcett, 1991)

Allies in Healing: When the Person You Love Was Sexually Abused by Laura Davis, Harper Perennial (Harper & Row, 1991)

Beginning to Heal: A First Book for Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis (HarperCollins, 1993)

Breaking Down the Wall of Silence by Alice Miller (Plume, 1993)

Breaking Free of the Shame Trap by Christine Brautigam Evans (Ballantine, 1994)

Broken Boys/Mending Men: Recovery from Child Sexual Abuse by Stephen Grubman-Black, Tab Books, Blue Ridge Summit, Pa., 1990

Facing the Brokenness: Meditations for Parents of Sexually Abused Children by K.C. Ridings (Herald Press, 1991)

Family Violence: The Compassionate Church Responds by Melissa A. Miller (Herald Press, 1994)

Ghosts in the Bedroom: A Guide for Partners of Incest Survivors by Ken Graber (Health Communications, 1991)

Healing the Shame That Binds You by John Bradshaw (Health Communications, 1988)

Is Nothing Sacred? When Sex Invades the Pastoral Relationship by Marie Fortune (Harper & Row, 1989)

Jonas and Sally by Rich Foss (Good Books, 1994)

On the Path: Affirmations for Adults Recovering from Child Sexual Abuse by Nancy W. (HarperCollins, 1991)

Outgrowing the Pain Together: A Book for Spouses and Partners of Adults Abused as Children by Eliana Gil (Dell, 1992)

Pastoral Care of Survivors of Family Abuse by James Leehan

Perilous Rivalry: When Siblings Become Abusive by Vernon R. Wiehe with Teresa Herring (Free Press, 1991)

Repressed Memories: A Journey to Recovery from Sexual Abuse by Renee Fredrickson (Fireside, 1992)

Secret Survivors: Uncovering Incest and its Aftereffects in Women by Sue Blume (Ballantine, 1991)

Sex in the Forbidden Zone by Peter Rutter (Fawcett, 1991)

Sex in the Parish by Karen Lebacqz and Ronald G. Barton (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991)

Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches by Carolyn Holderread Heggen (Herald Press, 1993)

Sexual Violence—The Unmentionable Sin: An Ethical and Pastoral Perspective by Marie M. Fortune (Pilgrim Press, 1983)

Survivor Prayers: Talking with God about Childhood Sexual Abuse by Catherine J. Foote (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994)

The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis (Harper & Row, 1992)

The Dance of Intimacy by Harriet Goldhor-Lerner (HarperCollins, 1990)

The Rock that Is Higher by Madeleine L'Engle (Shaw, 1993)

The Sexual Healing Journey: A Guide for Survivors of Sexual Abuse by Wendy Maltz (Harper & Row, 1991)

The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse by David Johnson and Jeff Van Vonderen (Bethany House, 1991)

The Tree that Survived the Winter by Mary Fahy (Paulist Press, 1989)

Victims No Longer: Men Recovering from Incest by Mike Lew (Harper & Row, 1988)

Woman, Why Do You Weep? Spirituality for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse by Sandra M. Flaherty (Paulist Press, 1992)

Journals

MCC Women's Concerns Reports, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Women's Concerns, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500

Moving Forward, P.O. Box 4426, Arlington, VA 22204

The Healing Woman, P.O. Box 3038, Moss Beach, CA 94038

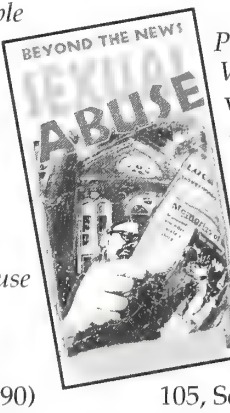
Packets

Broken Boundaries: Child Sexual Abuse, Crossing the Boundary: Sexual Abuse by Professionals and *Purple Packet: Wife Abuse,* compiled by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Women's Concerns, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500

Videos

After Sexual Abuse, Mennonite Central Committee (same as above)

Beyond the News: Sexual Abuse, Mennonite Media Productions, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801



Broken Vows: Religious Perspectives on Domestic Violence, 59-minute video with 40-page study guide and audience brochures, and *Not in My Church,* 45-minute video, study guide available, both videos available from the Center for Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, 1914 N. 34th St., Suite 105, Seattle, WA 98103-9058

Partners in Healing by Wendy Maltz, S. Christiansen and G. Joffee, from Independent Video Services, 401 E. 10th Ave., Suite 160, Eugene, OR 97401

This list is from a larger list compiled by the abuse resource group at East Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

HEALING the sin in our midst

How one congregation responded when a member sexually abused his daughter

Anonymous

In November 1992, about 40 members of the Oakview Mennonite Church* gathered "to bind and loose" a member who had been charged and convicted of sexually molesting his teenage daughter. The pastor officially pronounced a statement of binding: "We bind you to guard your sexuality and use of touch, and we bind you from formal leadership of youth." After words of agreement by Rob* (the offender), the pastor similarly pronounced the statement of loosing: "We loose you to participate fully in the life and worship of the church, and we loose you from the public and formal congregational label of 'offender.'"

The story began in June 1990 when one of the members of the pastoral team at Oakview was informed that Rob had been arrested and charged with sexual assault. The member suggested that the congregation be informed, and the family agreed. An announcement was made that Sunday.

In the weeks following, a pastoral team of three part-time ministers and three lay members set about providing support and developing a process for dealing with the issue at the congregational level.

Several assumptions guided the team's work. One was that the pastoral team would direct the process.

A second assumption was that the pastoral team would be open with the congregation about what was happening. Members of the team felt that openness would be more helpful to everyone involved. In addition to verbal announcements, the team wrote regular reports to the congregation.

A third assumption was that Oakview was to minister to all people affected: to the offender, Rob, to the victim, Sandra, to other family members and to any other survivors of abuse for whom this incident may have triggered past issues.

Oakview was blessed that several of its members had expertise in relevant areas. One of the pastoral team members, Louise, was a counselor of survivors of sexual abuse. Others had experience in conflict resolution.

No models: If the pastoral team felt ill-equipped to deal with sexual abuse, it was because there were simply no models to follow. The team found only one other story of a congregation dealing with sexual abuse, and it described a situation quite different from Oakview's.

The work of the team was carried out at several levels. One of these was providing direct assistance to the family involved. Within the first two weeks, support groups were established for Rob, for his wife, Carolyn, and for Sandra. Each family member also received professional counseling outside the church context. A special meeting for Sandra and the young people was held. Arrangements were made for people to attend Rob's court appearance and sentencing.

Later, members of the congregation helped Rob set up his own apartment and provided transportation to and from the detention center where he served a 30-day sentence on weekends. Others helped arrange for Rob's 120-hour community service at a local sexual abuse treatment center.

At another level, the pastoral team tried to minister to other survivors of sexual abuse or family violence in the congregation. A September 1990 memo invited survivors to identify themselves to designated team members and offered to arrange meetings with other survivors, to pay for counseling services and to provide other forms of support. Eventually the team learned of 24 survivors of family violence from 10 families.

The third level was that of the congregation as a whole. Just two weeks after Rob's arrest, the worship service was shortened and a special meeting was held where members could talk about feelings and make suggestions. After this they asked the pastoral team to facilitate education on sexuality and sexual abuse.

The first of several informational meetings was held that November. A local social worker spoke on sexual abuse. The following January a couple from another denomination told about the husband's abuse of their daughter. Later two survivors from outside the congregation shared their experiences.

Rob's attendance at church became an issue. An initial court order had stipulated he not be in the presence of his daughter. But when the order was lifted, the congregation had to decide whether or not he was welcome.

Already in the late fall of 1990 Rob had expressed a desire to attend worship and participate in congregational life. A significant number of people supported this request. But another group, including some survivors and

**The names of the congregation and of people interviewed have been changed. The congregation wishes to remain anonymous.*

their family members, were uncomfortable with this. Several indicated that if Rob were present at church, they could not attend.

The pastoral team delayed any action until a year later. By December 1991 Rob's family was ready for his return to church. Some survivors also indicated they were open to having him present despite their discomfort.

The pastoral team invited Rob to attend worship on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, plus additional social gatherings. The idea was that everyone would know ahead of time when Rob would be present, and that individuals could choose to absent themselves.

'No longer a safe place': While there was considerable support for this move, several expressed concern. The spouse of one survivor said, "The church is no longer a safe place. I experience now what my spouse has known to be the norm."

The pastoral team tried to provide a hearing for these voices by asking several survivors and the spouse of a survivor to prepare statements to be read before the congregation in April 1992. They invited a counselor from outside the congregation to listen to anyone who wished to share concerns about the process.

In late spring the team announced that over the next six months the congregation would proceed toward restoring Rob to full fellowship. Its reasons were that Rob had completed his sentence, he continued to undergo counseling and he demonstrated an understanding of the seriousness of his actions. Many were urging that Rob return to regular participation.

In June, two dozen people gathered to hear Rob talk about his experiences and to respond to questions. That October a similar-sized group met to say to Rob and others what needed to be said. The service of binding and loosing proceeded on Nov. 18, 1992.

A significant portion of members thought the pastoral team made too much of the sexual abuse issue and that the process dragged on far too long. One older member, Mary, said it seemed like the church was trying to punish Rob when it should have been urging forgiveness. "It felt like we were going by the textbook rather than the Bible," she said. "Is one sin greater than another? God doesn't think so."

> ***"Our young people know that the church is not perfect, but it's a place where there is struggle and where there is healing."***
>
> **A parent**

Some of those directly affected by family violence felt the process moved too quickly and didn't sufficiently reflect the lengthy healing process of abused people. One survivor wrote, "I don't want my experience to be minimized in the church's haste to forgive."

Another issue was the pastoral team's leadership. While members of the team tried to minister to all parties, the team was perceived by some as being pro-survivor and by others as pro-offender. Some felt the team was holding everything up because of survivors, while a few of those survivors and their family members found it difficult to trust the team, given their sense that "Rob was more important."

To respond to concerns that the pastoral team didn't represent survivors' interests sufficiently, a new committee was established in fall 1992 to process ongoing issues around family violence and sexual abuse not directly related to Rob's case. Those named to the committee were a survivor, a survivor's husband, a member of the pastoral team and a person representing the wider congregation.

One of this committee's goals was to build greater solidarity among the congregation's many survivors. Despite the pastoral team's offers to put survivors in touch with one another, few were ready to do so.

Looking back, members of the pastoral team realized it would have been wiser to have a specially delegated committee direct the process—not just because of perceived bias but in order to prevent burnout. Ted, one of Oakview's three part-time ministers, claimed that this issue consumed all the pastoral team's time and energy. "We couldn't attend to any other needs because everyone on the team was exhausted."

Some suggested that Oakview should have enlisted the assistance of a consultant in designing the process. According to one member, the use of an outside "listener" in the spring of 1992 was "too little too late." Pastor Ted agreed that even while the congregation had to "own" the process, some outside expertise would have helped.

Better than silence: There was near consensus that the open nature of the process, while painful, was good. For some survivors and their families this public discussion opened raw wounds. But most felt that open discussion was much better than silence. Members of the pastoral team agreed, though some questioned whether the same degree of openness would be possible in a large congregation.

The Oakview story is not over. The new committee is working at promoting ongoing dialogue within the congregation. Members of a small fellowship group with strong reservations about the process recently met with members of the pastoral team and an outside mediator to talk about their concerns. Healing continues.

But already members at Oakview can point to ways they have gained.

"We've learned that the church is where we can name our deepest hurts," says Louise.

"Our young people know that the church is not perfect, but it's a place where there is struggle and where there is healing," says Norm, a parent.

"I've always felt like an outsider in the church. In this new committee I'm beginning to feel like an insider," says Paul, a survivor's husband.

"The church's willingness to work with hurting people—that has meant a lot to me," says Brenda, a survivor.

"To stand with people in whatever they find themselves—that's what it means to be church," says Susan, church council chair. "That's what we have tried to do."

This article was sponsored by Meetinghouse, a consortium of Mennonite editors.

Letters

MORE ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

This is to express our continuing appreciation for the fine ministry to us that *The Mennonite* represents.

The Feb. 28 issue on the Lord's Table was exceptionally stimulating. In our exposure to various religious traditions we have participated in many different forms and schedules of celebrating the Lord's Supper. It is good to see our own church looking at the question of more frequent celebrations.

The whole Feb. 28 issue was special, but Jan Regier's article, "It's Suppertime" (page 9), was superb. Thanks to *The Mennonite* and thanks to Jan. *Fremont and Sara Regier, Maputo, Mozambique*

Thank you for your Feb. 28 issue about Communion. I enjoyed the combination of thoughtful reflection and practical ideas.

Our congregation has Communion at least quarterly. We invite to the table all who walk with Jesus, and we leave the decision up to parents or other adults accompanying children how that will be interpreted. Children are offered the same elements as adults. Most children and unbaptized youth choose to participate with what appears to be significant understanding and appreciation of its meaning.

Our most recent observance of Communion was on the first Sunday of Lent and was a variation of the Passover-New Exodus theme described in your article. Our focus was on the providence of God. The Gospel text for the day was Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. The sermon described Lent—and all our spiritual life—as a journey that often takes us into places that are barren and desolate. We noticed that both Jesus and the Israelites were led into the wilderness by the Spirit and action of God. (We would feel better if we could blame the wilderness on the devil.) But God never abandons us there. As a reminder to look for God's provision in our own wilderness experiences, especially as we entered the season of Lent, we concluded the service with Communion. As people came forward, they were offered "bread for the journey."

One reason for the power of ritual is that it makes tangible and personal something that might otherwise remain abstract and distant. I hope the worshipers were able to not only hear and think about God's provision in barren places but to experience it and watch for further signs of it long after they left that service. *Teresa Moser McDermid, Sunrise Mennonite Church, Clackamas, Ore.*

PRAYERS OF MIGHT

My prayer in response to the good letter of Max H. Waltner, Freeman, S.D. (March 28 issue), is that the people of God be so full of spiritual blessings and confidence ourselves that we can stand before the throne of God on judgment day saying, "You desired mercy, not sacrifice," *and got it from me.* Yes, to love the sinner without letting the plague of the sinner destroy that which may at times be invisible, yet mighty as the Kingdom. Can our prayers of might heal all sinners everywhere? *Larry Lakin, Lawrence, Kan.*

THE WORD OF GOD IS ALIVE

It has been interesting to me that in the discussions and letters regarding homosexuality we keep seeing and hearing that the official position of the church is that homosexuality is a sin. However, we seldom hear the part of the statement that says we will continue to be in dialogue with one another on the topic. A couple of years ago, when the church I was attending was confronted with the issue, I spent a lot of time searching Scripture and my heart to determine where I stood. During the course of events I saw incredible pain inflicted on people in the name of "the church." Not once have I, a white, middle-aged, middle-class, heterosexual female, been asked how I had come to the conclusions that I did. In fact, when I tried to talk to a leader in the church I was told that what I had to say was irrelevant because "you are not a Christian."

Some people think that because I believe the church should include all people who are seeking that I do not believe in the Word. I don't believe the Word is a bunch of pages with letters on them. I believe the Word is alive; I believe it is powerful; I believe it transforms my mind; I believe it is making a new creature out of even me.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his book *Ethics*, writes, "The man who judges envisages the law as a criterion which he applies to others, and he envisages himself as being responsible for the execution of the law. He forgets that there is only one lawgiver and judge. ... If a man employs his knowledge of the law in accusing or condemning ... then in truth he accuses and condemns the law itself, for he mistrusts it and doubts that it possesses the power of the living word of God to establish itself and to take effect by itself." He goes on to say that the church then becomes a "closed circle of the devout. Instead of the open church of Jesus Christ which serves the world to the end, there is now some allegedly primitive Christian ideal of a church."

It takes all my energy learning to submit and be transformed. It's freeing to realize that it's not my job to guide the work of the Spirit in others. When I opened the door for Him to come in and sup with me, He brought his friends. *Connie F. Swift, Phoenix, Ariz.*

PEOPLE ARE GIFTS

I thoroughly enjoyed the article on compassionate communication by Bernie Wiebe (see Jan. 24 issue, page 11). People are gifts to me, and I want my speech to reflect my beliefs. Also, I'd like to learn all I can about nonviolent interpersonal conflict resolution. I'd like to ask you and your readers about any publications or books that could be sent to me concerning conflict resolution and peacemaking. I'd like to give my thanks in advance for any help. *Daniel May, Pacific, Mo.*

CARE FOR ALL OF LIFE

To be "prolife" means to me to be "for life." It means not only to care for the life of the fetus, nine months in the womb, but for the life that emerges, a miracle. The greater picture of love, it seems to me, is to value that person for all his or her life and to care for and tend to all of God's creation.

To be "for life" means having reverence and awe for the earth, the sky, the air we breathe, for the animals, birds, reptiles, fish, mammals and plants. It means taking care of our forests, swamplands, deserts, waters.

To be "for life" means having reverence and awe for the Native baby that emerges into life, a miracle. It means having reverence for the Hispanic, the Chinese, the African-American, the Polish, the Iraqi, the German and the Jew.

To be "for life" means having reverence and awe for the homosexual baby born, a miracle after nine months in the womb. It means respecting that life regardless of his or her sexual orientation, not only because he or she is one of God's beloved children, the same as you and I, but also for the valuable contribution he or she makes to my life and yours and to the world.

We forget that we are not really different from each other. We all have hearts that beat and break, we all are in need of love, tenderness and acceptance and, given the chance, have an abundance of love to give. We all laugh and cry, feel sorrow and pain and joy. We all feel the painful hurts others inflict upon us with their insensitivity, injustices and judgments.

We say we value the life in the womb. A child is born, a precious gift given to us by God. We love and nurture it and the child grows into a beautiful man or woman. Then war rages, sometimes, we say, in the name of God. We send our precious gifts off to kill or be killed. Where, then, is the reverence and awe for their lives and lives of those we oppose? Where is reverence and awe in war and destruction?

We choose to abort the earth and waters, the sky and the air with pollution. We abort the mentally ill, the handicapped, the one who is "different" by our standards. We abort people because of their color, nationality, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. Each time we take away one's dignity and right to life we abort them.

Perhaps there is hope if we just think before we laugh at or make jokes about or ignore or use derogatory language or discriminate against or gossip or, even worse, judge them. Maybe then we will see glimpses of goodness we failed to see before and accept each other openly, embracing our differences, free at last to live our lives to the fullest, to the honor and glory of Almighty God. *Janet K. Hartzell, Souderton, Pa.*

HOPE IN THE HOLY LAND

Thank you for your excellent coverage of the search for hope in the Holy Land (March 28 issue). As one who is familiar with the region, its hopes and its faults, I commend you for your reporting. I also feel it is especially fitting that you conclude with the importance for Christians to pray for peace in the Holy Land.

One might conclude from the articles that Mennonite Central Committee is the only Mennonite connection to the Middle East. On behalf of MCC I would like to point out for the record that Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Board of Missions also have people and programs in the Middle East. There is good communication and cooperation between these agencies and MCC. We encourage your readers also to be aware of these other Mennonite connections. *Ed Epp, Middle East Desk for Mennonite Central Committee, Winnipeg*

Inside
Mennonite
The search for hope in the Holy Land

Thank you so much for your March 28 coverage of the Palestinian/Israeli situation. How I wish those huge U.S. payments to Israel for arms would stop! *Elaine Sommers Rich, Bluffton, Ohio*

I enjoyed reading your article on the Middle East trip (March 28 issue). Great pictures!

I especially appreciated the manner in which you let people speak for themselves.

One correction: The Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement dialogues *have* continued. They take place every two weeks—one of the most tangible (Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored) signs of hope in this troubled place.

Perhaps it needs to be clarified that, since nearly everyone in Gaza is a Muslim, to work with local people means Mennonite Central Committee must work with Islamic charitable societies. *Chip Poston, Jerusalem*

Thank you for thoughtfully reporting your interactions with West Bank people (March 28 issue). The stories of West Bank Palestinians need to be heard more frequently; thus it is encouraging to know that you journalists were in the West Bank listening and sensitively projecting yourselves into that situation. When we lived in Israel-Palestine, our Palestinian friends often told us, "Maybe you can't personally do a lot to change our situation, but please listen to us and share our stories so that we will not be forgotten."

Your editorial reminds us that as Americans we are part of a government that sends billions of dollars to Israel yearly and which ultimately supports Israel's occupation of the West Bank. Palestinian people often asked us, "Why does your government support Israel in this way when they know what effect it has on us?" What might happen if more Americans had to struggle to find words to answer that question as they see the suffering eyes of a family whose land was confiscated, or people whose home was demolished, or parents whose sons were imprisoned and tortured?

As Mennonite Christians, we are committed to Jesus' teachings to globally share the gospel, which embodies compassion, love, peace and justice. Thus, as followers of Jesus, we will respond as your editorial suggests: pray for the people's liberation; support Mennonite Central Committee's work; write letters (and I would add, speak) to our government officials.

God bless you as you continue to be prophetic in the church. *Kathryn Hunsberger Seitz, Telford, Pa.*

Ideas your church can try

Beatrice (Neb.) Mennonite Church pastor Ed Kauffman has, for the past couple of years, brought members of the church's catechism class to Newton, Kan., where they visit the offices of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Central Committee Central States, Western District Conference and the Bethel College campus.

Speaking out

Don't forgive and forget

Isaac Block

Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

—Colossians 3:13

A teenaged daughter in a pastor's home broke faith with her parents. One night she came home in an inebriated state. In the morning she went to her parents and asked for forgiveness. The parents assured her of forgiveness but agreed with her that when her head cleared they would come back to the issue and discuss it more fully.

Sometime later the parents said, "Let's come back now and talk about the events of the other night." The daughter said, "Dad, when you preach you say that when we forgive we promise we will never bring the subject up again. You're not doing what you preach."

Are we to forgive and forget? No. Forgiveness is about discovering a way to live with the reality of what has happened.

When there is an offense, the relationship between the two parties is under a new set of stresses. The severity of the offense and the depth of the injury will determine what is left or can be salvaged of the relationship.

In order for a broken relationship to move toward healing, the offender and the offended each have tasks to perform. Offenders will never experience the restoration of a relationship unless they repent.

A repentant offender will listen to the other's pain without interrupting, defending or correcting the offended person's feelings. Repentant offenders will share the wound and with a groaning spirit will admit their sorrow.

Also, genuinely repentant offenders will distinguish between their intent and the impact their abuse had on the victim. They will accept responsibility for both.

Marie Fortune in her book *Keeping the Faith* (Harper & Row, 1987) says this about repentance: "To repent, in both the Old and New Testaments, means to turn away from, to change, never to repeat again. True repentance on the part of the abuser means that he never hits again and that he learns to relate to other people in ways that are not controlling, demanding and dominating. True repentance is not easy; it is hard work for him to change his abusive way of relating to you. But this is what is expected. Only when you have seen true repentance (and over a period of time) can you consider forgiveness."

Forgiveness is about discovering a way to live with the reality of what has happened.

The task of the offended is to forgive. From the point of view of the offended, cliches like "forgive and forget" are not helpful. They are a form of sealing the door to a hurtful chapter without recourse.

A person who tries to forget or to never talk about it again suppresses a painful situation. It will act like a silent virus that grows and eventually destroys the person.

Jesus said in Luke 17:3, "Be on your guard! If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive."

New realities: The offended person has two tasks. The first is unconditional, the second is conditional. The assumption is that someone has sinned against you. Your first task is to take heed to yourself, to be on guard. That is to say, you make decisions about managing your life. You can retaliate. You can plot revenge. You can regroup your personal resources. You can ask for help. You can do many things. But two things you cannot do. You cannot wish it away. Nor can you live as though it didn't happen. So you have to live with the new realities. These realities include the offense.

The second task is conditional. If the person repents, forgive that one. Marie Fortune says, "Forgiveness means putting that experience in perspective, putting it behind you and not allowing it to continue to victimize you. You can let go of it; you can remember it only when you need to. This is part of your healing of the pain of those experiences. Forgiveness is for you, not for the abuser. His repentance, not your forgiveness, is what will finally bring about his healing. Your forgiveness of him frees you from the memories of those experiences. This is what is God's will for you so that you can get on with your life and share your gifts with others" (*Keeping the Faith*).

How do we now transfer this concept into the experience of living in community, either in the family or in the church?

One way of understanding family relationships is in covenantal terms.

Covenant refers to trust and pledged faithfulness to one another. When there is a lapse on the part of one party, the other party remains trustworthy and faithful to the pledge. This holds out the possibility of restoration, renewal or forgiveness.

In Deuteronomy 30, God is in a covenant relationship with Israel. The covenant has three parts: (1) it promises a blessing to those who keep the covenant; (2) it promises a curse to those who fail to keep the covenant; (3) it promises restoration to those who sin but return to the Lord.

Only covenant relationships have built into them the possibility of restoration. Restoration and forgiveness are linked. We often lump forgiveness, restoration and the normalization of relationships into one piece. This is why we have said that to forgive is to forget, or to bring closure to a painful situation. So we quickly move toward normalization.

Speaking about forgiveness, in Matthew 18:18, Jesus said, "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Rather than understanding forgiveness as closure, forgiveness must be understood as an opening. It acknowledges the will to repent and gives per-

"Speaking out" does not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Wichita '95

prepare
the
way
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Triennial Reports to the General Conference Mennonite Church

The driving force for the General Conference Mennonite Church during the past three years has been its four goals:

- to nurture evangelism
- to teach and practice biblical principles
- to develop church leadership
- to seek Christian unity.

The reports that follow give an account of the resources used and programs administered to facilitate Christian education, home ministries, overseas mission, seminary education, and more. Much of this effort is in partnership with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) and with the area conferences across Canada and the United States.

The workbook available to delegates and others at Wichita '95 will include these reports. If you have concerns, questions, or ideas and are unable to attend, feel free to discuss these with a delegate from your congregation or write to general secretary Vern Preheim, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347.

General Board:

serving the churches, commissions, and seminary

The past triennium brought to completion four joint efforts of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference. The Holy Spirit guided our work on vision, confession of faith, integration exploration, and ministerial polity.

Vision: Healing and Hope (see top of next page) resulted from the prayerful discerning of the Vision and Goals Committee. The new vision statement should give us focus and energy into the next decade. Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower co-chaired the committee. Other GCs included Abe Bergen, Winnipeg, Man.; Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Wichita, Kans.; Ronald Krehbiel, Hesston, Kans.; and Alberto Quintela, Minneapolis, Minn.

In March, the General Board accepted Vern Preheim's (left) resignation, effective sometime in 1996. He has served as general secretary since 1980. Also pictured is conference moderator Darrell Fast.

A new **Confession of Faith** awaits delegate approval. One copy will be sent to each congregation. Those attending the conference will receive a copy in Wichita. Thousands of hours went into this project, co-chaired by Helmut Harder, Winnipeg, Man. Other GC committee members included Lois Barrett, Wichita, Kans.; Heinz Janzen, Newton, Kans.; Jake Tilitzky, Clearbrook, B.C.; and Ted VanderEnde, Pandora, Ohio.

The **Integration Exploration Committee** recommends that the Mennonite Church and the General Conference move toward integration. The text of the recommendations for Wichita '95 will be sent to congregations in May. The committee is co-chaired by James Gingerich of Moundridge, Kans. Other GCs on the committee includ-

Vision: Healing and Hope
God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
to grow as communities of grace, joy, and peace,
so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

ed Richard Early, Broadway, Va.; Ruth Naylor, Bluffton, Ohio; and Florence Driedger, Regina, Sask.

A joint committee on **ministerial polity** arrived at a common understanding of how the General Conference and the Mennonite Church should license and ordain ministers. The document produced will be useful to area conference leaders and committees on the ministry.

Ministerial Leadership Services, under the direction of John A. Esau, attends to various ministerial concerns and gives support to the area conference ministers. It provides opportunities for continuing education through the Pastor/Spouse Seminary Interterm and the Jerusalem Seminar. The office also provides guidelines for pastors' salaries and for pastoral transitions. Through the Ministry Inquiry Program, 51 college students gained experience in pastoral ministry during the past three years.

Marion Deckert has served since August 1993 as half-time secretary for the **Higher Education Council.** The council, chaired by James Schrag, Smithville, Ohio, includes representatives from the participating colleges and the General Board. The high priority has been to strengthen relationships between colleges and the supporting conferences.

Times of transition

The General Conference began the triennium with 372 member congregations. During the three years, three closed, five withdrew, and one merged. All congregations in the newly formed Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conferences have decided to join the General Conference, which means we will be receiving into membership thirty-nine new congregations from these two conferences plus another five that have applied as of March 20, 1995. Others are considering membership.

Covenant Mennonite, Hesston, Kans.; Faith Mennonite, Geneva, Neb.; and Houston (Texas) Chinese Mennonite closed. Bethesda Mennonite, Marion, S.D.; First Mennonite, Butterfield, Minn.; Herbert Mennonite, Herbert, Sask.; Emmaus Mennonite, Whitewater, Kans.; and Mt. Olivet Mennonite, Huron, S.D., withdrew. First Mennonite, Lima, Ohio, merged with another congregation to become Lima Mennonite Church.

In August 1994 the General Board proposed to restructure the General Conference in two ways. One proposal is to shift from the present three commissions to two. The second proposal is to create a U.S. General Conference. Both proposals are compatible with the thinking of the Integration Exploration Committee. However, in March 1995 the General Board decided not to bring these structural changes to Wichita '95 for a vote because of the already heavy agenda. The thought now is to process them at a later conference.

If integration receives a favorable vote in Wichita, the General Board proposes that the next regular conference be joint with the Mennonite Church in 1999 and that a special two-day conference be convened July 6-8, 1997, in Winnipeg, Man., following the CMC annual sessions.

The General Board met six times during the triennium to set the annual conference budget, appoint executive staff, and give overall guidance to General Conference work. New appointments included Lois Barrett to replace Hubert Brown as executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries, and Glendon Klaassen to replace Erwin Rempel as executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission. Norma Johnson was reappointed as executive secretary of the Commission on Education and Ted Stuckey as conference treasurer and business manager.

We are in times of transition. Conference leaders are committed to listening carefully to what congregations want the General Conference to be and do. Our challenge is to articulate a vision and discern what structures will serve us best as we seek to be faithful to Jesus Christ our Lord. *Vern Preheim, general secretary*

Division of General Services:

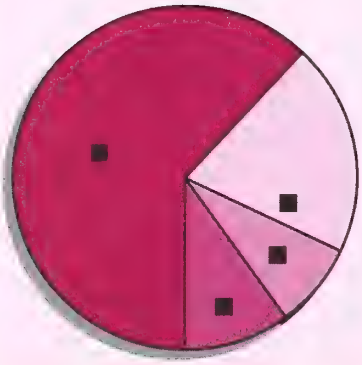
providing for communication and finance

The Division of General Services (DGS) continues to serve churches, the commissions, and the seminary through fund-raising, stewardship, communication, accounting, and related activities.

The General Conference budget

General Conference income and expenditure budgets declined significantly during the 1992-95 triennium, a trend that had begun in 1988. In response, the total conference budget was reduced by $701,066 U.S. over the three-year period. While the 1992 budget was $5,147,833 U.S., the 1995 budget is $4,446,767 U.S.

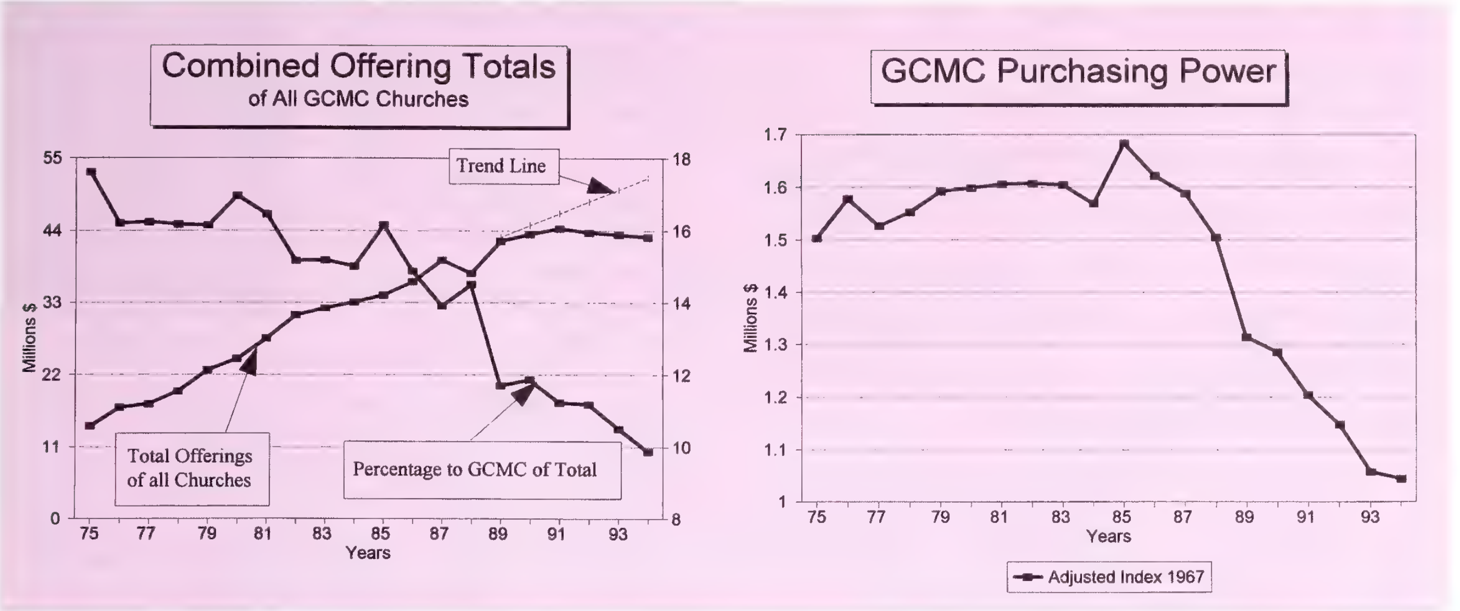
The decline in income can be attributed to reduced giving from churches and individuals, plus substantially decreased income from interest, estates, and annuities. The buying power of General Conference budgets from 1988 through 1994 has gone from



GENERAL CONFERENCE BUDGET 1995

Commission on Overseas Mission	$2,756,995	62 percent
Commission on Home Ministries	$889,353	20 percent
Commission on Education	$355,742	8 percent
Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary	$444,677	10 percent
Total	**$4,446,767**	**100 percent**

Of these amounts, the General Board uses $164,625 and the Division of General Services uses $618,999 for programs and support services. Included in the DGS total are $31,706 to support *The Mennonite* and $43,928 for *Der Bote.*



Giving by all General Conference churches to all causes increased every year until 1987. After a drop in 1988, the rise continued until 1991, followed by a slight decline (1994 figures estimated). Recent experience suggests a leveling off of total giving. Had the increase continued through 1994, we would have seen approximately $52 million in giving instead of the $43 million estimated for 1994. The decline in giving not only affects churches but the work of the conference. Furthermore, the percentage given to the General Conference has declined from 17.6 percent in 1979 to 9.9 percent in 1994. (Graphs are calculated from reports supplied by churches.)

$3,994,119 U.S. to $2,830,756 U.S., greatly impacting what the commissions and seminary can do.

New policy for distributing donations

In March 1995 DGS recommended and the General Board adopted a new policy for distributing donations that strengthens the impact of designated gifts. Prior to the change, some donors and churches felt that the effect of designated gifts was lessened because undesignated gifts were used at year's end to shore up programs still in need of funds. Now undesignated gifts are distributed according to a budget proration rather than where most needed.

The 1995 proration gives 62 percent to the Commission on Overseas Mission, 20 percent to the Commission on Home Ministries, 10 percent to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and 8 percent to the Commission on Education. Donors may still designate gifts to areas where most needed.

Communications

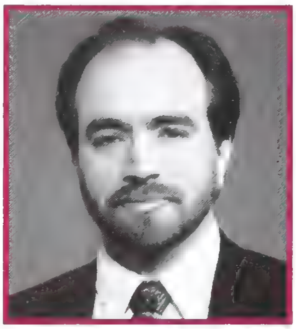
The Mennonite serves 8,500 households. At the start of the triennium, Gordon Houser became editor and Larry Penner and Melanie Mueller joined the staff as assistant editor and editorial assistant, respectively. The three made changes in the magazine, working to make it inspiring and useful. Improved marketing and a reduction in staff time since 1992 have saved the commissions $25,000 a year in funds needed to support production.

The triennium also began with a staff change in the news department. Former news service editor Carla Reimer returned after teaching at Woodstock School in India.

In 1993, editor Doris Schmidt began desktop publishing the conference *Handbook of Information*, thereby reducing the financial support required from the commissions.

Also in 1993, communications director Dave Linscheid completed a major study of General Conference communication. As a result, DGS decided to discontinue the quarterly *Being In Touch* and to again distribute church bulletin inserts, which the people who were surveyed said they preferred. The study also showed affirmation for *The Mennonite.*

The General Conference continues to publish the German-language newspaper *Der Bote* in cooperation with CMC.



In April 1995 Mark Vincent began as director of the Long-Term Stewardship Cultivation Project, a joint venture of Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, DGS, and CMC. The initial goal of the project is to bring together conference leaders and people from congregations to develop a "theology of money" as a basis for teaching and nurturing responsible stewardship.

Stewardship education and planned giving

After conference stewardship director Ray Frey retired in 1992, Frank and Holly Keller joined DGS staff to work in stewardship education and fund-raising, working part time on a volunteer basis and part time for salary. With area conference representatives and staff from the Mennonite Foundation, Frank leads stewardship education seminars in churches. He also visits donors, as does planned-giving director Gary Franz. Gary visits donors, monitors giving trends, and encourages estate planning and deferred giving.

Support services

Working behind the scenes, DGS staff also oversee other programs that benefit pastors, the commissions, and churches: the Missionary Supplemental Retirement Fund, the Pastors' Aid Fund, a pension plan for pastors and staff, and Church Extension Services. Staff continue to provide receipting and accounting services, working closely with the CMC treasurer's office. *Dave Linscheid, communications director; Ted Stuckey, business manager and treasurer*

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary:

linking ministry education to the congregation

Looking ahead, we at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., want to link our vision for ministry education with where the church is and where it wants to be.

In the past three years we have responded to the needs of congregations by creating and revising academic programs and expanding continuing education. In response to changing realities in the broader church, we launched a comprehensive campaign and addressed enrollment declines. Each of these steps puts us in a better position to fulfill our mission in the church.

Leadership transitions and continuity

In the last year, however, we were reminded that we cannot anticipate every change. The event that dominates the 1994-95 year is the death of President Marlin E. Miller on November 3, 1994.

The AMBS leadership team includes Gayle Gerber Koontz and Willard Swartley. Gayle, who joined the faculty in 1982, served as dean from 1990 to February 1995, and began serving as acting president at the death of Marlin Miller. She will return to her role as professor of theology this summer. Willard was scheduled to become dean this summer but assumed the role in February to ease leadership transitions. He came to AMBS in 1978 and has served in a variety of administrative roles, as well as professor of New Testament.

We mourn the loss of a leader who guided the seminary for more than twenty years, first as president of Goshen Biblical Seminary (GBS) and then also as president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary (MBS). While his loss leaves a gap in our lives and the seminary, we give thanks for his wise leadership, which continues to guide our work.

A presidential search committee representing both the General Conference and the Mennonite Church has begun its work. We ask you to pray for God's guidance in this process.

Vision and plans

A strategic planning process—identifying goals for AMBS to better serve the church—is one important gift Marlin Miller gave the seminary. The team that worked on this process is now entrusted with carrying forward the vision and goals of the plan.

The long-term experience of the AMBS leadership team is a crucial asset in this time of transition: Gayle Gerber Koontz, acting president until July 1 and former dean; Willard M. Swartley, dean and long-term professor of New Testament; Richard A. Kauffman, administrative vice-president; and Virgil Claassen, business manager for more than twenty years. Gerald Gerbrandt will become interim president July 1.

Gerald Gerbrandt will assume the role of interim president of AMBS on July 1. The dean of Canadian Mennonite Bible College brings to the position administrative experience, knowledge of theological education throughout the Mennonite Church and the General Conference, and a strong love for the church. His appointment is for one year, with the anticipation that a longer-term president will be named during the coming year

Another development under Marlin Miller's leadership was a new phase in the partnership of GBS and MBS. The seminaries began their association in 1958, shared the Elkhart campus since 1969, and shared a president since 1990. The incorporation of AMBS as one seminary was completed in 1993, allowing it to work more efficiently while representing the two denominations it serves.

Partners for Ministry

AMBS launched a comprehensive fund drive in 1993, with a primary goal to undergird the ongoing operation of the seminary. The campaign also includes support for faculty, particularly in the areas of missions and Mennonite life and thought; support for student aid; creation of a continuing education facility; and expansion of the AMBS library.

The AMBS Partners for Ministry campaign reached its halfway mark earlier this year with pledges and contributions totaling $6 million. The goal of $11.9 million in a three-and-a-half-year period will provide a stronger financial base for the ongoing seminary program and will strengthen continuing education, faculty support, student aid, and the AMBS library.

By March 1995 more than half of the $11.9 million goal—$6 million—had been pledged or contributed. One of the firstfruits of the campaign is the Lambright Center, a conference/learning center created in the renovated AMBS dormitory.

In spite of the campaign's early success, AMBS—like many other church institutions—struggles with decreasing contributions for ongoing expenses. Special appeals and gifts in the past few years have enabled AMBS to balance its budget. But the concern continues: How does the seminary continue to offer strong educational programs to meet the church's needs when contributions to overall conference work are decreasing?

Educational programs

In fall 1994 we launched a revised plan of study for the Master of Divinity degree. With renewed emphasis on pastoral ministry, the plan includes required internships and attention to pastoral care, biblical studies, preaching, and theology. It also includes more attention to spiritual formation for ministry.

Other new programs are in planning stages. We welcome counsel from church members and leaders on these:

- Preparation for ministry for people who cannot come to campus for long periods. Many pastors today support themselves with part-time jobs alongside their pastoral positions. Other people are called by their congregations to be deacons or elders. How do we help these people prepare for ministry?
- Doctor of Ministry program. A doctoral program provides a structure to help pastors broaden and deepen their understanding of ministry, using the congregational settings where they serve. Strengthening pastors' resources and skills for Christian mission in contemporary culture is the unique emphasis of the program AMBS is considering.
- Invitation for one year of study. People throughout the church in many different vocations are seeking resources for spiritual growth. How can AMBS make its resources available to more people who want to deepen their Christian commitment or explore future directions?

Encouraging people to consider ministry

A major challenge facing AMBS and the Mennonite church as a whole is to prepare people now to fill openings for pastors, missionaries, and other church leaders in the future. With enrollment declining at AMBS over the last ten years—and, in fact, enrollment of Mennonites in all seminaries declining—how will future needs be met?

In the fall 1994 *AMBS Window*, Vern Preheim, General Conference general secretary, said, "The General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church in March 1994 said that the highest priority for the conference was to develop pastoral and lay leadership with strong Mennonite-Anabaptist convictions."

Jim Lapp, general secretary of the Mennonite Church, wrote, "We need to recognize the importance of Anabaptist/Mennonite training for pastors. If there will be a Mennonite Church in the twenty-first century, special attention needs to be paid to where and how our pastors are trained."

The AMBS board, faculty, and staff are addressing this concern directly and carefully. However, the responsibility to help people consider and prepare for church vocations also lies with families, pastors, and congregations. How can we work together at this challenge?

Your prayers and counsel

We invite your counsel as we take steps to help meet the needs of the church. Your prayers are vital as new people join the AMBS leadership team.

With God's guidance and grace, we continue working to fulfill our mission: AMBS is dedicated to helping ministers of Jesus Christ grow toward spiritual maturity, theological depth and discernment, wise pastoral practice, and personal commitment to God's reign of peace and righteousness. *Gayle Gerber Koontz, acting president*

Commission on Education:

proclaiming, enabling, nurturing

To proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, enable congregations to make disciples in the context of the believers' church, and nurture wholeness in relationships: This is the mission of the Commission on Education.

The mission statement of the Commission on Education (COE) serves as a tool for evaluating current programs and focusing future plans.

To implement this mission, the divisions of the commission, education and publication, will together provide curriculum for congregations.

Jubilee: God's Good News, the new Sunday school curriculum for children two years old through grade eight, was introduced and ready for use in September 1994. The General Conference worked on this project with the Mennonite Church, Church of the Brethren, and Brethren in Christ. The Mennonite Brethren and Friends United Meeting endorsed Jubilee and became cooperative users. Many people from our conference were involved in developing, writing, illustrating, and testing Jubilee. An intensive plan was implemented to introduce Jubilee. Many congregations have reported renewed energy and commitment for Christian education as a result of these new materials.

Numerous congregations discovered community outreach through Venture Clubs. The material for all six years is complete. *A Leadership Adventure*, a training video, was produced in 1993. A new handbook for Venture Clubs will be available in summer 1995. *Venture Club News!*, a quarterly newsletter, is a tool for sharing stories and new ideas.

Melanie Deyarmin, Rosalee Otto, and Brian Burkholder actively participated in the ACT Weekend at Camp Luz, Ohio, in September 1992. This teacher-training event was sponsored by Central District and Ohio Conference.

During the triennium Faith & Life Press (FLP) issued *I Am Somebody God Loves* and *Simon Peter* in the Living Stones collection. These alternative curricula pieces, developed by congregational leaders, are suitable for summer Bible school, midweek meetings, or retreats.

In response to a request for junior high resources, FLP produced the Fast Lane Bible Studies, resources with reproducible pages for students. Themes in the series range from racism to the Lord's Prayer.

Major change took place in youth materials. The cooperative group that had published Youth Bible Studies dissolved. We formed a new partnership with the Church of the Brethren to produce Generation Why Bible Studies. *With*, the magazine for teenagers, and *YouthGuide*, the newsletter for youth leaders, became our sole responsibility when Mennonite Publishing House withdrew from being a cooperative publisher.

For 107 years the General Conference has published *Bibelstudien Für Erwachsene* for German Sunday school classes. Our German-speaking constituency is getting smaller. The price was increased to avoid financial losses on this resource. In the future we will have to decide how long to publish *Bibelstudien*.

The education division will address issues of life stages, equip and resource leaders, and work at lifestyle decisions.

The "Go now, and tell ..." COE tours were a major project for this triennium. Contact was initiated with every congregation in Canada and the United States. The purpose of the tours was to renew a vision for congregational Christian education. We learned anew about the diversity in our congregations. We heard a call for a new approach to adult Bible study. Repeatedly, church members shared concerns about biblical literacy.

The reality of shrinking budgets affected programs during the triennium. The half-time position of director of family life was cut, along with the Family Life Reference Council. Also cut was the General Conference Historical Committee.

COE created *The sCEne: Setting the Stage for Christian Education*, a new quarterly newsletter for Christian educators. *The sCEne* replaced *Resource*, which had been mailed with Sunday school orders. One copy of *The sCEne* is sent to each congregation, with permission to duplicate. Ideas are included for teachers of children, youth, young adults, and adults.

The three staff members who work with children, youth, and young adults utilize the valuable network of Christian Education Resource People, the Youth Ministry Council, and the Young Adult Reference Council. Area conferences are represented on each council.

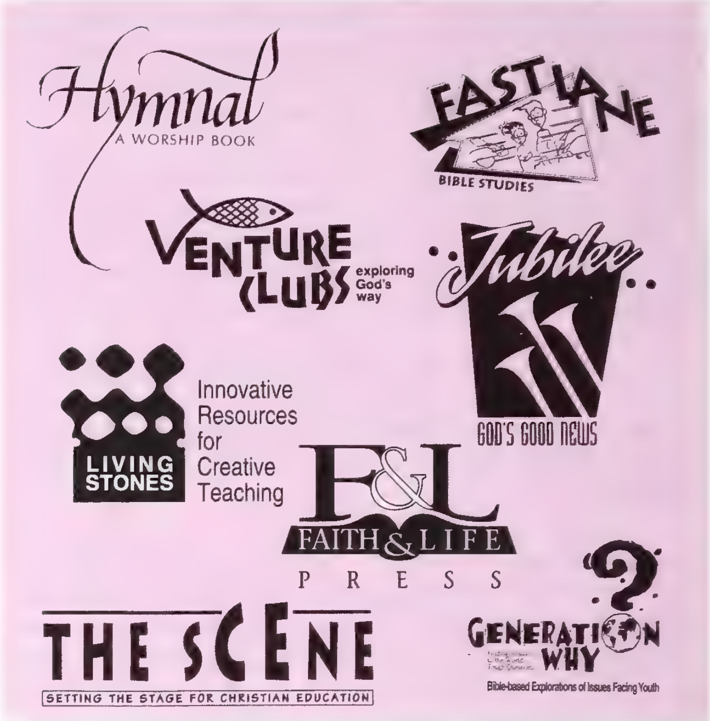
Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship in Winnipeg, Man., had a special Jubilee Service on September 11, 1994. Representatives from the Worship Committee and the Children's Ministries Committee planned the celebration.

The links provided to congregations and area conferences by this network are crucial for informing, shaping, and carrying out the work of COE.

Aid to Christian Teaching (ACT) Weekends—offered jointly with the Mennonite Church—and other teacher-training events have been well attended. An attendance record of over 200 was set at the Kansas ACT weekend in September 1994.

In response to questions and concerns from Christian educators, COE distributed *Keeping the Faith: Choosing Curriculum for Your Congregation*, a pamphlet that outlines important principles, values, beliefs, and questions to consider when selecting materials for any age level.

What does it mean to view faith development as a lifelong journey? Christian educators often ask this question. To respond, FLP produced a Faith Development Series of booklets that cover five life stages: children, youth, young adults, middle adults, and older adults.



These logos represent some of the products that Faith & Life Press has produced independently or cooperatively during the past three years.

The joint Mennonite Church and General Conference Spirituality Reference Council dreamed of a resource on prayer and spirituality from an Anabaptist perspective. The result was the book and cassette *Praying with the Anabaptists*.

From 1993-1995, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and COE co-sponsored a project to provide worship materials for Lent. General Conference and Mennonite Church pastors and lay leaders in Indiana, Alberta, and Illinois produced the materials.

COE continues to provide the official General Conference link to the Mennonite Library and Archives, as it has since 1990.

Through Faith and Life Press, the publication division will publish and promote books, hymnals, periodicals, and worship and study materials for congregations. It will use its resources to assist the agencies of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Since 1992, COE has formed product teams and a management team to better carry out the responsibilities of FLP. As a result, educators, editors, marketers, financiers, customer service representatives, and the publisher have interdependent roles. FLP faces financial challenges. The publishing task is strengthened as we work together, sharing a common vision.

Faith & Life bookstores in Berne, Ind., and Newton, Kans., have had increased sales as they serve their respective communities.

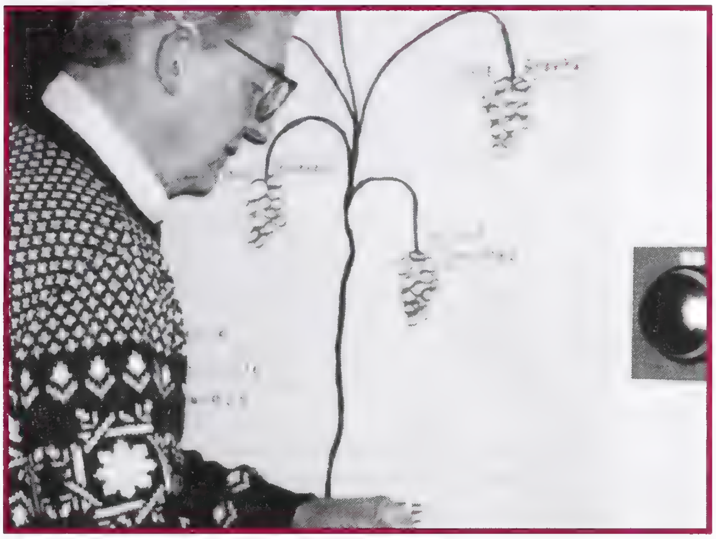
As we begin a new triennium, COE faces several challenges. How will we work on Christian education issues creatively when financial resources are decreasing? In what ways can links be strengthened between congregations, area conferences, and COE? How do we meet the need for materials in several different languages? What does it mean to be a denominational publisher at the close of this century? We look forward to discussing these issues with you at Wichita '95. *Norma J. Johnson, executive secretary*

Commission on Home Ministries:

expanding the witness of God's people

To expand the witness of God's people in Canada and the United States is the mission of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM). Together with you, your congregation, and area conferences, we are working to:

- create new congregations where people can joyfully give allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and follow him as disciples;
- proclaim peace and the gospel of reconciliation—with God, in the church, even with enemies, and witness to society;
- invite all peoples to become part of God's people, celebrating the new humanity in Christ that includes people from minority cultures and the dominant culture;
- demonstrate Christ's way of service and call people to Christ's way of life, to share in his cross and his resurrection in the power of the Holy Spirit.



Leonard Wiebe of Peace Mennonite Community Church, Aurora, Colo., shares LIFE fruits at an area support meeting.

Resources

CHM provides resources to congregations and area conferences as well as to individuals.

Peace and justice resources have been sent to individuals and congregations on such subjects as military draft registration, alternatives to paying war taxes in the United States and Canada, and New Call to Peacemaking peace education resources. Study materials on the fiftieth anniversary of the use of nuclear weapons have been prepared.

Spanish-speaking Mennonites are receiving leadership training through the Anabaptist Biblical Institute. The institute offers courses in Old Testament, New Testament, Anabaptist history and theology, pastoral care, and family life. More than 100 students across the continent, from British Columbia to Florida, are enrolled. CHM has also provided leadership-training resources, church-planting consultation, and other resources to Hispanic, Chinese, Hmong, Lao, Native, and African-American congregations as well as Hopi Mission School.

Outreach

The Commission on Home Ministries helps congregations and area conferences witness to the world around them:

- In the three-year LIFE (Living in Faithful Evangelism) process, 167 General Conference congregations have participated. Further evangelism resources are being offered through the Andrew Center. New efforts in congregational evangelism are in the planning stages.
- Christian Peacemaker Teams have been sent to Haiti and the Middle East.
- In order to put into action the 1992 General Conference "Resolution to Laugh with Abraham and Sarah," CHM started an *Abraham and Sarah Prayerletter,* reaching 123 congregations and involving over 2,000 people in prayers for new churches.
- Six Abraham and Sarah Caravans have sent retired Mennonites to be present with new congregations, many of whom have few people of Mennonite background.
- Twelve new churches have joined area conferences and another sixteen are emerging. This is a good start toward our nine-year goal of fifty new churches by 2001.
- CHM designated the Mennonite church efforts in the Fresno, Calif., area as a City on a Hill in 1994. The 1995 City on a Hill is Toronto. Special funds help churches in these areas show how service, peace, and new church development work hand in hand for a witness to the whole gospel.

Service

Through Mennonite Voluntary Service, CHM is matching volunteers with service assignments, most of them in association with local Mennonite congregations. Currently seventy-four people are serving one-year terms or longer in twenty-two locations. New units have opened during the past triennium in Riverton, Man.; Boulder, Colo.; and New York City, N.Y.

Youth Venture and Group Venture, high-school-age programs operated in cooperation with Mennonite Board of Missions, last year placed 906 youth and 315 adult sponsors and leaders in short-term service projects.

How can we expand the witness of God's people in the next three years?

How can the General Conference be in mission to North America, in a setting saturated with violence, materialism, individu-

MVS workers Patricia Dick serving in Hamilton, Ont.; Jaime Friesen serving in Winnipeg, Man.; and Shannon Neufeldt serving in Hamilton, Ont., pose at the Eastern Unit Retreat at Camp Friedenswald in Michigan.

CHM stories

Lincoln Dall, a certified public accountant from Orange, Calif., is an MVS worker with Winnipeg Harvest, a food bank. "Little things happen to validate that this is where God wants me to be," he says, recalling how an elderly woman kissed his hand after he served her a bowl of soup at Siloam Mission. "The woman who runs Siloam Mission told me that without the food from Winnipeg Harvest, her place wouldn't exist."

"I have so much more understanding about the Native culture now," said Inga Reinhart, Seattle, after her Youth Venture experience in Manigotogan, Man. "I don't think you can be open-minded about another culture if you don't know anything about it."

At the LIFE symposium in Winnipeg, Man., in 1993, Helga Froese, Steinbach, Man., said, "We were told that evangelism should be about helping others move along to a greater understanding of God, instead of trying to clinch a final yes or no. In other words, we meet people where they are in their faith journey."

For Consuelo Moreno, a member of the House of the Lord Fellowship in La Puente, Calif., and a student in the Anabaptist Biblical Institute, a longtime dream is now reality. "I tried to enroll in other institutions but the doors were always closed. The studies are practical. The material is self-taught and easy to understand. I can make it. I now know my doctrine. I have more self-confidence from having studied."

When pastor Shoua Moua visits a Hmong family in Fresno for the first time, he asks how they left Laos. On his second visit, he explains that he is from a church and asks about any difficulties they are experiencing. On the third visit, Shoua offers resources to help with problems and then, before he leaves, offers a short prayer. "I try to explain that our God is more powerful [than the traditional spirit world]," he said. Several families have converted to Christianity because they have experienced healing through Shoua's prayers.

As part of its ninetieth anniversary in 1994, White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church, Busby, Mont., held a prayer breakfast to provide a time of healing. "As we celebrate, we also need to remember that in our life together there have been times of difficulty and pain and that God cares about that as well," said pastor Willis Busenitz.

Anabaptist Biblical Institute directors take time out from their meeting to pray for physical healing for Pedro Saucedo (center). Standing are (from left) Byron Guzmán, Margaret Ediger, and Ingrid Schultz.

alism, nationalism, racism, and an ever-widening gap between rich and poor?

How can we bring spiritual resources and the good news of salvation and discipleship to people in North America who are outside the church?

How can we understand ourselves as God's holy nation, commissioned to proclaim the mighty acts of the one who has called us from darkness into light (1 Peter 2:9)?

We welcome your answers and your questions as we work together to be God's people in mission in North America.
Lois Barrett, executive secretary

Commission on Overseas Mission:

sharing and learning around the world

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

In an age of reorganization and new paradigms on global, national, regional, and local levels, the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) is affected and changed. Besides trying to understand change, our challenge is to implement the wishes of General Conference members as we respond to God's call to share the wonderful message and life of Jesus Christ.

A vision for mission has been implemented since the founding of the conference in 1860. In 1900 the conference sent its first mission workers to India. Well over 1,000 people have served faithfully since then. God's blessings have been abundant, and hundreds of people have responded in faith. To God be the glory!

A review (1992-1995)

One priority during the triennium has been to energize our congregations in North America to a new vision for mission:

- Special mission events have been held in various places. Mission workers on North America Assignment as well as staff have made 486 church visits to share biblical vision as well as ways that God has been working overseas.
- Literature reporting COM's involvements, the popular *COM Directory for Prayer and Information*, recruitment brochures and listings, mission displays, slide sets, and videos inform and energize people.
- A month-long mission emphasis was held in the Newton, Kans., area in connection with the Great Plains Seminary. Wilbert Shenk taught a missions course, with input from several COM workers and staff from other agencies. COM staff and others visited

Larry Kehler, COM secretary for Asia (seated at center left), and Titus Liao, secretary for the Taiwan Mennonite church, sign the new church-to-church agreement between the General Conference and Taiwan Mennonite Christian Church during fortieth anniversary celebrations in Hualien in February 1994. Looking on are (left to right) Hugh Sprunger, former COM worker in Taiwan; Tom Lehman, COM chairperson; and David Lin, chairperson of the Taiwan Mennonite churches.

churches to preach and conduct workshops on new shapes for mission.

- On International Learning Visits, participants observed and worked in overseas Mennonite mission contexts. In 1993 eight youth ministers representing various area conferences went to Colombia for two weeks. In 1994 nine people, again from various parts of the United States and Canada, experienced dynamics and challenges in Hong Kong and Taiwan.
- "Mission in Reverse" is a term used to indicate that North American Mennonites need to learn from sisters and brothers overseas. When church leaders from overseas have studied Bible and theology in North America, COM has sponsored visits to churches to share their faith and vision. Visitors have come from Botswana, Colombia, Mexico, Taiwan, and other places.

Learning about and reflecting on mission has also been a priority:

- Commission meetings have included presentations and "missiological reflection" on ministry and mission to the Former Soviet Union, led by Walter Sawatsky; the impact of global, national, and denominational realities on mission agencies, by Wilbert Shenk; a Korean vision for Mennonite churches, by Yoon Sik Lee; nonformal theological education, by Fremont and Sara Regier; and the Taiwan Mennonite experience, by Titus Liao and Kim Chen.
- Annually a COM seminar is held in North America for appointees and returned workers. These seminars have featured Tite Tienou from Burkina Faso, Samuel Escobar from Peru, and Wilbert Shenk from AMBS.
- COM facilitates short-term placements for youth and adults, through which participants experience overseas mission and test the idea of longer service. Options include the YES (Youth Evangelism Service) Program in partnership with Eastern Mennonite Mission; a PCNA (Program of Conscientization for North Americans) workshop and work camp in Colombia; the MENNO (Mennonites Encountering New Neighbors Overseas) Project, and others. Approximately forty people have been involved in the last three years.

Other significant projects or events include:

- Transitions in overseas Mennonite church associations. The Taiwan Christian Mennonite Conference celebrated its fortieth anniversary, signed an agreement establishing a church-to-church relationship with the General Conference, and established mission outreach in partnership with COM among Taiwanese in Buenos Aires. Political crises in Zaire resulted in the evacuation of several mission families; only one family is continuing there.
- New ministries. COM and Mennonite Central Committee appointed a family to work in the Former Soviet Union. COM and CMC began mission to the Aussiedler in Germany.
- A history of General Conference mission and the church in India. Written by Ruth Unrau, *A Time to Bind and a Time to Loose* relates ninety-five years of involvement there. COM still provides a resource family at Woodstock School and, occasionally, short-term professors at Union Biblical Seminary in Pune.
- Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) continues as our agency for mission in Africa. Four other mission agencies cooperate. A year ago Garry Prieb became executive secretary. In 1994 AIMM became legally incorporated in Canada. AIMM is exploring new outreach among Muslims.
- Partnerships with other mission agencies have emerged, including joint work or jointly appointed workers with Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Brethren Mission and Service, Eastern Mennonite Mission, Franconia Mennonite Conference, Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, Mennonite Central Committee, and others.
- COM has sponsored short-term resource people, especially Bible and theology professors, in Bolivia, Colombia, Former Soviet Union, India, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay.
- The Mission Partner Program directed by Jeannie Zehr has given moral, prayer, and financial support to workers. Ninety-nine churches are involved (forty-four in Canada and fifty-five in the United States). This program has made mission personal.
- Administrative transitions have occurred. The Asia/Northern Mexico and Canada coordinator as well as the secretary for personnel/FSU and Europe are now located in Winnipeg, Man. The executive secretary and the communications, Latin America, and assistant personnel secretaries are in Newton, Kans.
- For almost two years the Latin America desk for both COM and Mennonite Board of Missions was administered from Newton.

Aussiedler at arrival camp in Dranse, Eastern Germany

MENNO Project participants Irene Thiessen (left), Winkler, Man., and Iona Hostetter, Wadsworth, Ohio, display the comforter top they made from scraps of fabric left over when they made fitted sheets for beds at the Mennonite retreat center, Cachipay, Colombia.

Current realities (1995)

COM is ready to respond to people, churches, or conferences who hear God's call to mission in other lands. We encourage **new initiatives** for hands-on, personal involvement: networking, e-mail dialogues, tent-maker missioners, voluntary service, or others.

Integration with the Mennonite Church is an opportunity already explored in common global mission. Sharing information and doing mission together where feasible is not new.

At this writing COM supports **seventy-seven people** in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Brazil, China, Colombia, Former Soviet Union, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Lesotho, Mexico, South Africa, Taiwan, and Zaire.

Thirty-one **mission associates** serve in Angola, Brazil, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, New Guinea, Paraguay, Taiwan, the United States, and Zaire.

COM provides program funding for overseas leaders and churches in additional countries: Bolivia, Guatemala, Korea, and Uruguay.

Almost at any given time, COM has **requests from overseas** church associations and other agencies for twenty-five to thirty additional workers. Perhaps God is calling you to go or to fund someone else.

Future opportunity (1995 and beyond)

The vision for overseas mission that the General Conference implemented almost 100 years ago is being recorded by Tina Block Ediger in a **centennial pictorial book**. Look for it in 1998.

Our **mission vision** is that healing and hope for all people will flow from the hearts and hands of our sisters and brothers of other lands and from each of us to nourish and sustain us mutually. Let us never forget the people who still wait to experience God's salvation in Jesus Christ. The biblical call to "go, and make disciples of all nations" is our opportunity. COM encourages all to participate for God's glory. *Glendon Klaassen, executive secretary*

Women in Mission:

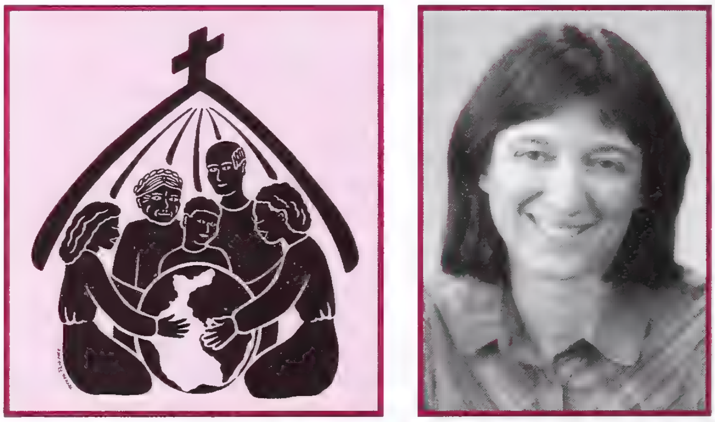
a commitment to God, Anabaptist identity, and mission

In 1989 Women in Mission (WM) conducted a thorough self-evaluation, gathering feedback from women inside and outside of the organization. As a result, in the past three years WM made changes in structure and terms of office.

Some feedback remains unresolved. Given the variety of needs of women, whose directives shall we follow? Some women do not feel a need for any group separate from men. Some women look to a women's group for mutual support without financial or organizational demands. And finally, there are members of Women in Mission who enjoy the mix of mutual support, Bible study, spiritual growth, and financial support of the church. Membership definition continues to be a crucial issue.

Bek Linsenmeyer became editor for WM in 1992, giving editing input for *Window* and the annual Bible study guide, which is jointly produced by WM and the Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) of the Mennonite Church. The guide has gone from packet to booklet form. With this change and high-quality Bible study lessons and program helps, the guide has been well received.

Prayer and financial support of women studying in church leadership continued, including the two-year support of He Hong, a Chinese woman pastor, as well as women studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.



"Household of God" is the new two-year theme for WM and WMSC. Suzanne Lawrence is the writer for the first year of study on Ruth.

At the heart of WM lies the interrelationship between women and the church. Financial and prayer support for the church at all levels reflects WM's historical commitment to incorporate Anabaptist identity with a mission to our world. Our prayer is that God will continue to lead WM to be a place where women's gifts are named, used, and valued to the glory of God and to the strengthening of Christ's church. *Susan Jantzen, coordinator*

Mennonite Men:
building men and churches

Last year the Tenth Man church building program of Mennonite Men granted $25,000 U.S. to the thriving Calgary (Alta.) Vietnamese Mennonite Church. This gift contributed to a partnership of the local church, Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, donated labor, and a loan from the Mennonite Foundation of Canada. By drawing down its indebtedness, the congregation was able to begin mission in Edmonton. Now they are offering help to COM to begin mission with Vietnamese in Hong Kong.

During the past three years, Mennonite Men has helped six new congregations with $102,000 U.S. in grants. Across North America, men have donated many hours of labor to such projects. Four more applications are in hand, asking for $128,000 U.S. over the next three years.

A baptism at Calgary (Alta.) Vietnamese Mennonite Church in August 1993. The congregation received a Tenth Man grant.

Calgary (Alta.) Vietnamese Mennonite Church

Local Mennonite Men groups of all kinds continue to emerge—for service projects, Bible study, prayer, mutual support, and studying male identity in a changing society. The Mennonite Men office in Newton seeks to be a channel for sharing information among such groups.

In the light of the Christian faith, Mennonite men work at evaluating new philosophies and movements affecting men. Some apparent differences are matters of style, not substance. While some men are attracted to small groups, others are inspired by large gatherings.

Participants in Mennonite Men seek to be full partners with pastors, congregations, area leaders, and all General Conference agencies in promoting full-fledged Christian discipleship and participation in the mission of the church—locally, areawide, and worldwide (Matthew 28:16-20). *Heinz Janzen, coordinator*

Photo credits: p. GC-1 and 3, Dave Linscheid; p. GC-4, left, Mary E. Klassen; p. GC-4, right, J. Tyler Klassen; p. GC-5, Ken Hawkley; p. GC-6, Abe Penner; p. GC-7, left, CHM; p. GC-7, right, Chuck Neufeld; p. GC-8, CHM; p. GC-9, top, COM; p. GC-9, bottom, Herb Fransen; p. GC-10, top, Stan Hostetter; p. GC-10, bottom, Dan Bergen; p. GC-11, top two, Heinz Janzen.

Nominees for General Conference Elections

The General Conference nominating committee has selected nominees for the ballot at the triennial sessions, July 25-30, at Wichita, Kans. Delegates may make further nominations at the conference. Information comparable to that printed below, with signatures of both nominator and nominee, must be submitted to the conference secretary by noon on July 26. This information will be made available to delegates several hours in advance of the voting at 2 p.m. on Thursday, July 27. (Fraction votes will be rejected. Votes must be in whole numbers.)

The CHM U.S. and Schowalter Foundation elections will be held at 3:15 p.m. on July 25, during the U.S. Assembly.

Each term is for six years, except for unexpired terms and for the officers who serve for three years. An asterisk (*) indicates an incumbent. In the case of an eligible incumbent officer, the nominating committee may bring a single name for re-election.

The nominating committee consists of Sarah Arn, Lansdale, Pa.; Evaleen Bertsche, Chenoa, Ill.; Ron Claassen, Sanger, Calif.; Florence Driedger, Regina, Sask.; Arlyn Friesen Epp, Waterloo, Ont.; Marianne Paetkau, Edmonton, Alta.; Winifred Saner, Elkhart, Ind.; and Donald Steelberg, Wichita, Kans.

To save space, the following acronyms will be used: AMBS—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary; CDC—Central District Conference; CMC—Conference of Mennonites in Canada; DGS—Division of General Services; EDC—Eastern District Conference; GB—General Board; GC—General Conference Mennonite Church; MCC—Mennonite Central Committee; MCEC—Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada; NDC—Northern District Conference; PDC—Pacific District Conference; PNMC—Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference; PSMC—Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference; WDC—Western District Conference; WM—Women in Mission.

Moderator

***Darrell W. Fast**, Newton, Kans.; pastor, Bethel College Mennonite Church since 1986; member, Mennonite Biblical Seminary Board of Trustees, 1980-1992; secretary, United Mennonite Churches of Ontario, 1972-78; member, Inter-Mennonite Executive

Council, 1972-79 (forerunner of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada); pastor, Toronto United Mennonite Church, 1970-86; member, GC General Board, 1992-95. GOAL: "I continue to see the General Conference as a family of Mennonite congregations and institutions, confessing the historic Christian faith revealed in the Scriptures, affirmed in the Apostles' Creed, and renewed in the Anabaptist vision. As we look beyond the question of integration with the Mennonite Church (which I favor), I see the challenge facing us as one of identity and mission in a new century and millennium. *We need each other* in the Mennonite/Christian community, so that God's healing and hope can flow through us to the world around us."

Assistant Moderator

***Bernie Wiebe,** Winnipeg, Man.; professor of Conflict Resolution Studies, Menno Simons College, Winnipeg; member, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg; editor, *The Mennonite,* 1976-86; assistant moderator, General Conference, 1992-95; member, Higher Education Council; chair, General Conference Program Committee for Wichita '95. GOAL: "To help our conference and churches to generate more dynamic expression and to build a clearer vision of God's Spirit leading among us."

Secretary

***Anita Penner,** Abbotsford, B.C.; member, Olivet Mennonite Church; member, B.C. Conference Music Committee, 1989-91; mission worker, COM Taiwan, 1975-87; secretary, GC General Board, 1992-95. GOAL: "To assist in listening to our congregations. The General Board should be a resource framework for congregations who are working to fulfill Jesus' mandate."

General Board

Elect two

***Marian Franz,** Washington, D.C.; executive director, National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund and Peace Tax Foundation; member, Hyattsville Mennonite Church; curriculum writer, Foundation Series; member, Committee on the Ministry, Family Life Committee, Commission on Education, 1962-68; member, Commission on Home Ministries, 1980-86; member, GC General Board, 1989-95. GOAL: "The rich resources of cooperating congregations should be guided by the General Board into a world ministry of justice, peace, service, and witness to Christ—through bold, timely, and loving acts of words of faith."

***Adam Liu,** Cupertino, Calif.; pastor, Cupertino Mennonite Church; member, Pacific District Conference Ministerial Committee, 1986-92; previously a Mennonite pastor, Taiwan; member, GC General Board, 1992-95. GOAL: "The General Board needs to provide encouragement, strategies, and resources to facilitate dynamic spiritual renewal in our congregations. Much like our ancestors, we need to have the courage to stand in our present generation in order to win the battle for the Kingdom of God."

Pam Peters-Pries, Aberdeen, Sask.; member and minister of youth and young adults, Osler Mennonite Church, Osler, Sask.; previously director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba; lay minister, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, Man.; author, *Life 101: A Christian Handbook for Young Adults* to be released by Faith & Life Press in 1996. GOAL: "I envision the General Board as a place where the voices of all our diverse church members are carefully considered in setting direction for our denomination and where decisions are clearly communicated back to congregations and individuals."

Tobi Thiessen, Toronto, Ont.; research analyst, Japanese economic consulting firm, T. Iwasaki and Associates; member, Toronto United Mennonite Church, member of mission and service committee, member and secretary of the church building committee. GOAL: "That the board approach the directional, visionary, and financial challenges before it with a spirit of openness and rejoicing that through the discernment process we will find strength and commitment."

Continuing members are Jake Fransen, Vineland, Ont., and Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, Fresno, Calif. The officers are also on the board. In addition, each commission selects two; AMBS, one; and DGS, one. The General Board may appoint two to five members.

Division of General Services

Elect three

***Rick Braun-Janzen,** Abbotsford, B.C.; member, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C.; primary caregiver for preschool children; past experience in financial management predominantly in nonprofit organizations; member, DGS, 1992-95. GOAL: "A challenge presently facing the conference is how to adapt and restructure to better serve and meet the needs of congregations. I would value the opportunity to participate in the discussion and implementation of the changes necessary to reshape the work of the conference."

Larry Cornies, London, Ont.; journalist, *The London Free Press*; adjunct professor, Graduate School of Journalism, University of Western Ontario, London; member, Valleyview Mennonite Church, London; alumni representative on the board and chair of development committee, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.; inserts editor, MCEC; chair, Council on Church and Media, 1991-93; GC communications director, 1984-85; associate editor, *The Mennonite,* 1980-84. GOAL: "To help the church more clearly identify and articulate its mission in a fast-changing world, and to help it more effectively communicate that mission to a wide range of constituencies."

Wallis D. Goertzen, Henderson, Neb.; farmer; co-owner, Aluminum Supply Co., Hanford, Calif.; past owner, Midwest Irrigation Co., Henderson, Neb.; past co-owner, Henderson State Bank; deacon board member, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson. GOAL: "If elected to the DGS, I would actively promote awareness of conference programs and the need for support of them. I strongly affirm the Anabaptist mission program of the conference at home and abroad."

Kerry Strayer, Tulsa, Okla.; assistant professor of communication, University of Tulsa; member, Neil Ave. Mennonite Church, Columbus, Ohio; actively involved in new church plant, Pearl of Great Price Fellowship, Tulsa; resource person, Integration Exploration Committee. GOAL: "If elected to the DGS, I would work to increase awareness of the important ways that local, conference, and denominational programs interact to create a unified voice for mission."

Cheryl Zehr Walker, Ephrata, Pa.; media coordinator, SELFHELP Crafts of the World; member, Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.; chairperson, Council on Church and Media, 1993-95; former MCC voluntary service worker, Akron, Pa. GOAL: "If elected to DGS, I would work to strengthen mutual understanding and connections between church members and conference workers and increase support of conference goals."

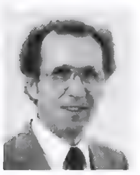
***Allen Yoder, Jr.,** Middlebury, Ind.; retired; past president, Jayco, Inc., continuing as board member and consultant; partner and president, Deutsch Kase Haus; partner, Yoder Popcorn Co.; owner, Heritage Furniture; member, Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.; member, board and executive committee of Bluffton (Ohio) College; member, advisory committee for AMBS; member, advisory board of Ivy Tech, Elkhart, Ind.; member, DGS, 1992-95. GOAL: "If elected, I would strive to be fiscally responsible to matching the constituent's financial support to desired programs with a balanced budget a must."

Continuing members are James Harder, North Newton, Kans.; Connie Hart-Yellowman, El Reno, Okla.; Elmer Wall, Pretty Prairie, Kans. In addition to those elected above, the General Board will appoint five members.

Commission on Education

Elect three (two for six years and one for three years)

Ken Dueck, Winnipeg, Man.; grade 5 teacher, Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School; member, Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg; past chair, local MVS committee and Sunday school committee at Bethel; current member, board, and chairperson, Education Committee at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate; member, Professional Development Committee at Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary. GOAL: "I would like to pursue ideas that keep Christian education relevant to people in our congregations. I am particularly interested in helping children and youth value and integrate their faith, despite the pressures of the world we live in."



Jake Elias, Elkhart, Ind.; professor of New Testament, AMBS; member, Hively Ave. Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., and serves on Christian Education Commission; pastor, Mountainview Mennonite Church, Vancouver, 1968-74; dean, AMBS, 1981-90; professor, Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India, 1991; president, CDC, 1991-93. GOAL: "I pray that COE will continue to provide courageous leadership in developing resources that root children, youth, and adults in the biblical vision of God's unfolding reign."

Shoua Moua, Fresno, Calif.; church planter/pastor, Hmong Community Church—Mennonite since 1990; student, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary; director, Jubilee Jobs; served in many church positions before coming to the U.S. and becoming Mennonite. GOAL: "I want to develop a vision for Christian education that will help us do the things God wants us to do and help people learn more about God."

Tina Stoltzfus Schlabach, Tucson, Ariz.; member, Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, Tucson; Sunday school teacher; currently completing a second unit of Clinical Pastoral Education, University Medical Center, Tucson. GOAL: "If elected to COE, I would bring to it my desire to include diversity of peoples as well as children, youth, young adults, and all ages in the worship life of our congregations."

Adela Wedler, Edmonton, Alta.; teacher; member and chair of education committee, Faith Mennonite Church, Edmonton; secretary-treasurer, Alberta Women in Mission; have been member of church day-care board; leader in area of music, provincial Sunday school teacher workshops. GOAL: "To increase and maintain contact with congregations by supplying printed resource materials and resource people, and by providing congregations with individual support when necessary."

Emilia Zabala, Fresno, Calif.; member, leadership team, Peace Community Church—Mennonite; church planter, Iglesia Hispana de la Communidad de Paz since 1994; MCI supervisor; pastor, Iglesia Evangelica Menonita, Maracaibo, Venezuela, 1989-94. GOAL: "My goal for COE is that we can provide resources that meet the needs of new churches, especially the growing numbers that include people who do not speak English."

Continuing members are Loretta Baumgartner, Versailles, Mo. (CDC); Ardys Becker, Canby, Ore. (GC); Helen Kruger, Osler, Sask. (CMC); Judy Miller, Othello, Wash. (PNMC); Dana Selzer, Newton, Kans. (WDC); Jeff Wright, Upland, Calif. (PSMC). CMC, EDC, and NDC each will elect one member. The General Board may appoint two members.

Commission on Home Ministries

Elect two

***Craig Maven,** Berne, Ind.; senior pastor, First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.; EDC representative, CHM; CHM representative, Church Extension Services; served the EDC as peace worker, vice-president, president, ministerial committee, and various ad hoc committees. GOAL: "If chosen to continue on CHM, I see my role as helping to sharpen CHM's focus in the three areas of resourcing congregations, outreach beyond congregations, and voluntary service."

Maryls Neufeldt, Waterloo, Ont.; student in social development studies, University of Waterloo; member, Welcome Inn Church, Hamilton, Ont.; assistant pastor/community worker, Welcome Inn Church and Community Centre through Mennonite Voluntary Service. GOAL: "I would bring my voice as a young Canadian woman with a vision of empowering churches toward active peace and justice-making in our own communities."

Myron Schrag, Goshen, Ind.; pastor, Eighth St. Mennonite Church, Goshen; voluntary service, Mennonite Central

Committee, 1959-62; president, WDC, 1969-71; member, WDC peace and social concerns committee, 1972-73; chaplain, Woodstock School, India, 1973-76; vice-president, NDC, 1979-82; member, MBS board, 1980-92; member, GC General Board, 1989-92; member, GC Nominating Committee, 1986; member, CDC Evangelism and Church Development Committee, 1993 to present. GOAL: "To challenge and enable congregations to set priorities that will meet the spiritual and material needs of people who are in need of Good News."

Jodi Tse, Saskatoon, Sask.; member, Saskatoon Chinese Mennonite Church; homemaker; bachelor of commerce accounting major graduate, University of Saskatchewan, 1983; previous employment: accounts payable clerk, Revelstoke Co., Calgary; office manager, Rychjohn Investments Ltd., Saskatoon. GOAL: "To be available to further the kingdom of God through participation in CHM to help it inspire, strengthen, and lead local churches in the areas of evangelism, discipleship and leadership training, and peacemaking."

Continuing members are Floyd Bartel, Newton, Kans. (WDC); Tony Brown, Seattle, Wash. (GC); Susan Ortman Goering, Boulder, Colo. (GC); Warren Habegger, Berne, Ind. (CDC); Pat Olson, Sioux Falls, S.D. (NDC); Bernhard Sawatzky, Winnipeg, Man. (CMC); James Wenger, Fresno, Calif. (PSMC). EDC, PNMC, and CMC each will elect one member. The General Board may appoint two members.

Commission on Home Ministries U.S.

Elect one

Lee Brockmueller, Freeman, S.D.; farmer; member, Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman; board member, MCC Central States 1985-94; MCC volunteer, Bangladesh, 1981-84. GOAL: "If elected, my goal for CHM U.S. is to work toward keeping the commission's ministry relevant to the reality of increasing diversity within the General Conference and society at large."

Kathryn Goering Reid, Austin, Tex.; pastor, Austin Mennonite Church; Ecumenical Action Coordinator, Church Women United; board member, Austin

Metropolitan Ministries; vice-president, Foundation for the Homeless; member, Mid-Texas Mennonite Convention Coordinating Council, 1990-present. GOAL: "As a pastor of a new urban church, I would hope to increase the understanding of urban churches and the special issues that they face. I would also promote church growth, evangelism, service, peace, and social concerns in the church at large."

The continuing member is Nancy Brubaker, Reedley, Calif.

Commission on Overseas Mission

Elect two

***Tom Lehman,** Chapel Hill, N.C.; member, Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kans.; COM experience: interim member, 1987-88, WDC representative, 1989-95; COM chair and on GC General Board, 1992-95. Has represented the commission by speaking in churches in Kansas, Manitoba, Indiana, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina. GOAL: "Through its workers on five continents, COM is vigorously forming congregations of believers, training church leaders, and lifting up a new vision for mission. Its work deserves the strong support of the conference."

***Alberto Munoz,** Dallas, Tex.; data processor in court service, city of Dallas; member, Iglesia Cristiana Menonita, Dallas; member, COM 1991-95; voluntary service, MBM, Washington, D.C., 1993-95.

Shannon Neufeldt, Hamilton, Ont.; MVS community worker and assistant pastor, Welcome Inn; member, Peace Mennonite Church, Regina, Sask.; previous MVS term, Oklahoma City, Okla. GOAL: "My vision for COM is an agency that excites and engages its entire constituency, including young people, in the Christian work of ministry with and among the people of many nations."

Kathi Suderman, Aberdeen, Sask.; homemaker; member, Aberdeen Mennonite Church, serves on Sunday School committee, coordinates women's fellow-

ship group, active participant in music ministry; Overseas Mission Volunteer, COM in Taiwan, 1985-88. GOAL: "COM should be in partnership with our Christian sisters and brothers around the world, joyfully teaching, willingly learning from, positively witnessing to, and lovingly supporting each other."

Continuing members are Linda Dueck, Leamington, Ont. (GC); Mark Epp, Henderson, Neb. (NDC); Stanley Hostetter, Wadsworth, Ohio (CDC); Henry Patkau, Morden, Man. (CMC); Charles Sprunger, Trappe, Pa. (EDC); Matthew Swora, McPherson, Kans. (WDC); Christine Waltner, Manhattan, Kans. (GC). CMC, PNMC, and PSMC each will elect one member. The General Board may appoint two members.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Elect five (three for six years and two for three years)

***John Friesen**, Winnipeg, Man.; professor of history and theology, Canadian Mennonite Bible College; member, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg; member, MBS board 1989-95. GOAL: "AMBS continues to serve the churches very well in training both professional and lay leaders for the Mennonite community. The worship and study on campus create a good context for personal growth and development. In particular at AMBS, students are able to develop a knowledge and love for the church, both for its historical experiences and its present challenges. A critical but sympathetic understanding of the past is important for future leaders as they help churches move into new areas of ministry."

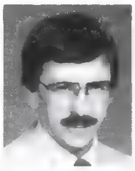
***Lydia Harder**, Scarborough, Ont.; presently interim director, Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre; taught one year, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg; member, Toronto United Mennonite Church; Sunday school teacher and Bible study leader; member, Believer's Church Bible Commentary editorial council; workshop and retreat speaker; board member, AMBS, 1989-95. GOAL: "As a board member, my goal is to help shape policies that will support faculty, staff, and students as they discern their unique callings in ministry, wrestle with biblical and theological tradition, and grow in integrity and compassion. This means being sensitively attuned to both the vision of the kingdom of God with its exciting promise of new life and to the reality of the institutional church in all its complexity and diversity."

Pat Houmphan, Langley, B.C.; Master of Divinity student, Associated Canadian Theological Schools; attends Bethel Mennonite Church, Aldergrove, B.C.; member, Grace Mennonite Church, Regina, Sask.; former church planter and pastor, Grace Laotian Fellowship and Grace Mennonite Chinese Church, Regina; graduate, Swift Current Bible Institute, Mennonite Brethren Bible College, University of Winnipeg (Man.); current ministries include translating new Confession of Faith into Lao, preaching, teaching in churches. GOAL: "That the seminary will continue to provide Anabaptist theology in order to effectively train Godly leaders to serve congregations and do evangelism and mission to reach the world for Christ."

Lee Lever, Ritzville, Wash.; pastor, Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville; member, board of directors, PNMC; chair, PNMC Planning Committee; pastor/advisor, Washington Mennonite Fellowship (WMF) Executive Committee; member, Columbia Basin Mennonite Community (PNMC church plant) board; mentor to new WMF pastors; graduate, AMBS; was student representative to AMBS faculty. GOAL: "The hope and strength of our Anabaptist/Mennonite way of faithfulness to Christ rests in a large part in how well we call, nurture, and inspire pastors and church leaders with that vision. I would like to assist AMBS as it plays a key role in fulfilling these tasks."

Paul Musselman, Telford, Pa.; retired; former controller, Moyer and Son, Inc., 35 years; member, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.; member, AMBS board, 1993-95; congregational involvements: chairman, deacon, treasurer, Sunday school superintendent, youth advisor, finance committee, education committee; EDC involvements: Business Administration Committee, Camp Men-O-Lan Board of Directors, Young Peoples Union. GOAL: "For AMBS to be an institution where individuals may be educated for positions of leadership in the church—such as pastors, missionaries, youth leaders, administrators, lay leaders—in an atmosphere where Christ's teachings and an Anabaptist heritage are a top priority. Develop a strong financial base for the various phases of the school's teaching program."

***Lois Thieszen Preheim,** Aurora, Neb.; teacher and school principal; Ph.D. in Administration, Curriculum and Instruction; member, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.; Sunday school teacher, board of outreach, WM vice-president, church choir member; member, AMBS board, 1993-95; student recruitment committee, search committee for interim AMBS president; member, COE, 1980-92; member, GC General Board, 1989-92; member, NDC executive committee, program committee, 1979-85; host, MCC exchange visitors; prior to 1980 voluntary service, MCC and CHM. GOAL: "To help facilitate Marlin Miller's vision for the seminary, which is in part to continue the work of strengthening the seminary bonds with our churches, districts, and provinces through pastoral training and continuing education for leaders."



Earl Sears, Newton, Kans.; pastor, Faith Mennonite Church, Newton; past chairman, WDC Education Committee; pastor member of board, Great Plains Seminary; board member, Offender Victim Ministries; past chairman, CDC Peace and Service Committee; pastor/teacher, Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind., 1969-87; past member, CDC executive committee; past member, WDC executive committee; teacher, Asuncion Christian Academy, Asuncion, Paraguay, 1977-78, and English teacher, Asuncion Mennonite Seminary, 1977. GOAL: "As one who has benefited from the work of the seminary, if elected to the board, I would advocate the importance of the seminary to the future growth and self-understanding of our ministry and faith as churches."

Laura Sportack, Vancouver; graduate, Regent College, Vancouver, M.A. Christian Studies; registered nurse; member and deacon, Richmond Mennonite Church, Vancouver, 1994-97; member, Christian Education Committee, B.C. conference, 1991-93; presently nominated for board member, Columbia Bible College, B.C. conference. GOAL: "To participate in the work of increasing biblical literacy within the church, so that the church might truly be a source of hope in our world, holding out the word of life."

Kathleen Temple, Freeman, S.D.; Master of Arts degree in Theology; co-pastor, Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman; member, Peace and Justice Committee of Pacific Coast Conference; co-coordinator, "Christians for Peace and Justice" (Pacific Coast). GOAL: "If elected to the AMBS board, I want to continue my fifteen-year involvement and interest in AMBS, help AMBS have the kind of impact on students that it has had on me, and help make seminary education and AMBS even more integral to the church."

Karen Martens Zimmerly, Regina, Sask.; co-pastor, Grace Mennonite Church, Regina; member, MCC Saskatchewan Women's Concerns Committee; past chair, education committee for Conference of Mennonites in B.C.; past member, restructuring committee for CMC. GOAL: "As a member of the AMBS board, I would like to work at helping the seminary and the church constituency hear each other's needs and concerns."

Continuing members are Victor Kliewer, Leamington, Ont. (CMC), and Tim Schrag, Beatrice, Neb. One to be elected by CMC. The General Board may appoint one member.

Program Committee

Elect two

Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Wichita, Kans.; finishing sixth year as associate pastor, Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita; beginning August 15 as minister of community life and director of continuing education, AMBS; member, worship planning committee for Wichita '95; member, MC/GC Vision and Goals Committee, 1991-95; member and chair, WDC program committee, 1991-93. GOAL: "I would like to help plan conference sessions that inspire our faith, shape our identity, and unite us in our mission."

Brenda Sawatzky Patkau, Goshen, Ind.; member and associate pastor, Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen. GOAL: "I would like to provide a listening ear in the conference during the planning years for the triennial sessions, in order to provide a forum for healthy, relevant discussion at the conference sessions. Worship, discussion, and fellowship are ways we as a General Conference church can seek to be faithful to our mandate of pointing to the Kingdom of God."

Cynthia Neufeld Smith, Topeka, Kans.; associate pastor and member, Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka; part-time doctoral student in church music, University of Kansas; member, WDC music and worship committee. GOAL: "I wish to help make our conference gatherings a place for worship, celebration, nurture, and clarification of whom God calls us to be and where God is calling us to go."

Valerie Wiebe, Langham, Sask.; caregiver for two young children; part-time fine arts student, University of Saskatchewan; member, Zoar Mennonite Church, Langham; church involvement includes directing choirs, serving on worship committee, member of Women in Mission (former president); child-care worker, Mennonite Voluntary Service, 1978-79; coordinator, children's program at CMC sessions, July 1991; teacher and artist/designer with job creation program, Mennonite Central Committee in Bangladesh, 1991-94.

The continuing member is Bernie Neufeld, Winnipeg, Man. (the GC assistant moderator is also on the Program Committee). The General Board will appoint three members.

Schowalter Foundation

Elect one

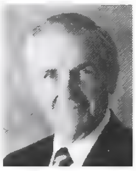
***Sue Ann Jantz**, Newton, Kans.; attorney; member, Grace Hill Mennonite, Whitewater, Kans.; attends Faith Mennonite, Newton; former reporter and editor, *The Newton Kansan*; board member, Schowalter Foundation, 1992-95; board member, Church Extension Services. GOAL: "The Schowalter Foundation should be a responsible and reliable resource for the church, facilitating its functions while demonstrating biblical principles of good stewardship."

Lelan R. Thieszen, Henderson, Neb.; executive vice-president, Henderson State Bank; licensed in insurance, real estate, and real estate appraisal; member, Bethesda Mennonite Church and stewardship committee, Henderson; general treasurer, Nebraska MCC sale. GOAL: "If elected, to support board policies and make wise decisions in investment and funds distribution."

The continuing member is Howard Baumgartner, Berne, Ind.

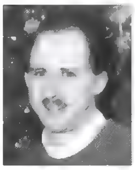
Mennonite Men

President (six-year term)



Harold L. Voth, Haven, Kans.; member and chairman, Burrton Mennonite Church, Burrton, Kans.; retired in 1994, superintendent of schools, 28 years, Haven Unified School District; former member, board of directors, Bethel College, North Newton, Kans., former member, WDC home missions and education committees.

Vice President (three-year term)



***Kim Claassen,** Whitewater, Kans.; member, Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, member on various church committees; operates a diversified grain and livestock farm with father and brothers; secretary, Mennonite Men executive for six years. GOAL: "I seek to encourage all men to have a deeper commitment to Jesus Christ by strengthening men's groups at the conference, district, and local levels through the exchange of information, resources, and ideas. Secondly, to enlist at least 500 contributors to the Tenth Man program so that more new congregations can receive assistance in purchasing their first church building."

Secretary (six-year term)

Melvin Pauls, Newton, Kans.; member, First Mennonite Church, Newton; served as Sunday school superintendent, church treasurer, and deacon, now on care giving commission; employee, Excel Industries, Inc., Hesston, Kans., for many years.

The continuing member is Carl Thieszen, North Newton, Kans.

Congregations Joining the General Conference Mennonite Church

The General Board recommends that the churches listed below be accepted as members of the General Conference Mennonite Church (membership figures are in parentheses):

From the newly formed Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference:

Idaho—Filer Mennonite, Filer (90); First Mennonite, Nampa (101).

Oregon—Albany Mennonite, Albany (94); Bethany Mennonite, Albany (81); Corvallis Mennonite Fellowship, Corvallis (82); Prince of Peace Mennonite, Corvallis (103); Ranch Chapel, Crooked River Branch (126); Zion Mennonite, Hubbard (213); Lebanon Mennonite, Lebanon (211); Logsden Neighborhood Mennonite, Logsden (37); First Mennonite, McMinnville (26); Portland Mennonite, Portland (211); Salem Mennonite, Salem (140); Western Mennonite, Salem (60); Plainview Mennonite, Shedd (50); River of Life Fellowship, Sweet Home (56); Iglesia Mennonite Pentecostes, Woodburn (120).

From the newly formed Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference:

Arizona—Black Mountain Mennonite, Chinle (13); Blue Gap Mennonite, Chinle (12); Trinity Mennonite, Glendale (354); Good Shepherd Mennonite, Phoenix (43); Intertribal Mennonite Fellowship, Phoenix (15); Sunnyslope Mennonite, Phoenix (337); Emmanuel Mennonite, Surprise (34).

California—Jemaat Kristen Indonesian Hosana Mennonite, Chino Hills (64); Faith Mennonite, Downey (20); Jemaat Kristen Indonesian Imanuel, Downey (60); Jemaat Kristen Indonesian Sion, Fullerton (?); Calvary Christian Fellowship, Inglewood (68); House of the Lord Fellowship, LaPuente (65); Family Mennonite, Los Angeles (152); Iglesia Monte Sinai Mennonite, Los Angeles (43); Prince of Peace Anabaptist Fellowship, Los Angeles (10); Iglesia Evangelica Bethel, N. Hollywood, Calif. (154); Jemaat Kristen Indonesian Anugrah, Pasadena (?); Pasadena Mennonite, Pasadena (76); Jemaat Kristen Indonesian Maranatha, Reseda (70); Casa de Oracion Menonita, San Diego (23); Mountain View Mennonite, Upland (32).

The following also have applied for membership:

- Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, Atlanta, Ga., 20 members; it relates to the Southeast Conference of the Mennonite Church.
- Comunidad de Esperanza, Dallas, Texas, 21 members; it is a member of the Western District Conference.
- Joy Mennonite Church, Oklahoma City, Okla., 13 members; it is a member of the Western District Conference.
- Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church, 91 members; it relates to the Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church.
- Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, New York, N.Y., 30 members; it relates to the Atlantic Coast Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Additional applications from congregations are expected.

Both parties in covenant relationships must name the sin and the sinner.

mission to begin the long way back into a relationship of trust.

You remember what has happened, not as a way of afflicting yourself or of exercising power over the one who offended you, but as a way of working toward healing. To loose someone is hard work. It is much more than a ceremony, although a ceremony may be helpful. To loose someone involves naming the sin and not minimizing its impact. This is true for both the one repenting and the one offering forgiveness.

A young woman in a premarriage counseling session turned to her fiance, looked him in the eye and said, "You violated me."

She named the sin without minimizing or generalizing. Both parties in covenant relationships must name the sin. They must also name the sinner. Far too often the innocent party takes on the blame for what happened.

Stressful: In families, the sins of the husbands, wives, parents and children must be named. They must be named by all parties. Until this happens, forgiveness will be superficial and relationships will remain stressful. The same thing is true in the church.

But what if your forgiving attitude is not met by repentance? Then, as Marie Fortune says, you make decisions about letting go of that experience.

The task of the offender is to repent. "In our church and in our families we are in too big a hurry to get on with life. We all want things to be perfect. But they aren't perfect. It is neither necessary nor helpful for us to pretend they are perfect. If forgiveness is understood as the opening of a relationship, then we can manage our memories, and in appropriate ways and at appropriate times we can revisit the issues and gradually rebuild relationships of trust and faithfulness." (Fortune, *Keeping the Faith*)

Isaac Block is pastor at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Bible

In search of the water of community

A new look at the story of the woman at the well

Liz Hay Kaethler

What can the church do to help a survivor of sexual abuse to heal? For survivors and those who relate to them, the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-42) is instructive. The Samaritan woman is not portrayed as a survivor of sexual assault, but there are similarities. For example, although she goes to the well to meet a physical need—she needs water—she is also in search of the water of community. She finds the first kind of water but not the second, for none of the women at the well would speak to her.

By his act of compassionate listening, Jesus restored her to her community.

Like many survivors of sexual abuse, this woman is isolated from her community—in it but not of it. Like her, we can be lonely, financially insecure and thirsty for someone to talk to.

Think of her journeying to the well over a period of days, months and years, drawing water to slake her thirst. But her thirst was deeper than the well. Endless drinks of water from her jug could not quench her thirst for community.

But she found the well of community closed to her. Tongues would wag about her when she was absent, while lips closed tight when she drew near. Ears soaked up the latest gossip about her, but turned to stone when she tried to speak.

On this day, however, when she came to the well, what did she find? Not just water but a man, a Jew. Maybe she asked herself, "What's he doing here? He's an outsider, too. I hope he doesn't want anything from me, for I have nothing to give."

What did Jesus do? He spoke to her, breaking the silence that had surrounded her. He asked for water, which she could give. The request started a conversation. The woman began to reveal the depths of her thirst to this stranger.

Slowly Jesus drew nearer the source of her pain. She responded cautiously, wondering how he would react. Would he condemn her? No. As a result, she allowed him to draw even closer to the source of her pain. They talked some more, this time about her need for a worshiping community.

She was looking for community. She could not worship in her hometown—bitter words, raised eyebrows and self-righteousness had barred the door. She was shut out from the community at the well and she felt shut out from her worshiping community. But was she also shut out from God? No. Jesus tells her that God is there, with her, in the quest and the questioning.

In the moment of compassionate listening, God was there for that woman. And what was her response? She left her water jug behind. Once it was too small to slake her thirst, but now it is too small to contain her joy. She returned to town. She spoke. She was heard.

At the end of the story, what do we hear? The voices of the villagers, who at long last are speaking to the woman. By his act of compassionate listening, Jesus restored her to her community. Her parched tongue was moistened and their stony hearts poured forth the water of response. And truly the wellspring of her joy gushed anew to live eternal.

Liz Hay Kaethler, a member of Grace Mennonite Church, St. Catharines, Ont., is a survivor of incest.

Fighting the 'big monster'

Colombian works for an alternative to the military.

Carla Reimer

As the coordinator of the Coalition for Conscientious Objection in Santafe de Bogota, Colombia, Mennonite Ricardo Pinzon appears undaunted by the difficulties that are part of his work.

Ricardo is not your average guy. Managing to blend his passion for social justice with a dash of humor, he is as likely to advocate pacifism as he is to expound on the importance of laughter. "Even though there are a lot of things that make us cry, we should never lose our smiles," he says.

The Colombian Mennonite Church started the coalition near the end of 1989 with the goal of making conscientious objection to military service a legal part of Colombia's constitution. The church receives support from the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Mennonite Central Committee and other organizations help fund the coalition.

In 1991, when the constitution was rewritten, the government recognized the importance of freedom of conscience. However, this general principle has not been adapted to Colombian law; conscientious objectors (COs) are still being prosecuted for their actions.

All male and female high school graduates are required by law to serve for one year in the military. Most high school graduates are 15 to 17 years old. Ricardo says this means the government is employing minors, which violates laws against child labor.

Since the military uses a lottery system to select its candidates, not every high school student actually serves. "Higher class students hardly ever are called into the military," says Ricardo. "Those who do not graduate from high school are required to serve for two years. They are put in the least luxurious positions and suffer the most. Many of them are black or indigenous people."

Once the individuals fulfill their term in the military, they receive their military papers. These papers, he says, are necessary to obtain a job, university education, driver's license, and even to claim one's inheritance.

The coalition wants to educate the public about pacifism. "We want to permeate our society with the reasons for conscientious objection," he says.

The coalition publishes a magazine and works with political parties that are open to pacifism. Ricardo says that while the coalition works with all age groups and backgrounds, the organization particularly addresses issues facing youth and women.

"The military is a big monster that steps hard on human rights."

Ricardo Pinzon

He presents workshops in high schools and tries to meet with students' families and teachers. "Most teachers promote a militaristic, macho culture. It is difficult for us to even get invited into the schools," he says.

"We try to build an awareness of the problems the military creates," he says. "If they learn to question military service, they will question all their cultural baggage."

He says people are afraid of the coalition because they think it could be seen as a front for the guerrillas. Often parents think that if their children question military service, they may become victims of the army.

Risks: Ricardo knows firsthand about the risks of conscientious objection. He was called into the military soon after he graduated from high school. But he opted not to be present for his second medical exam, which was required for entry into the army.

He was influenced by the teachings of the Berna Mennonite Church in Santafe de Bogota. Ricardo started attending the congregation when he was 16 or 17.

It wasn't until he was older that he understood how much "anguish" he would experience from his decision. "You can be stopped in the streets anytime, and if you do not have your military papers, you will be arrested."

Without his military papers, he also could not legally leave Colombia. Finally, about three years ago, with the help of a relative in the armed forces, Ricardo received amnesty.

He is studying to be a lawyer in the areas of international law and human rights. He has much more freedom today. But, he says, "I also have this weight in my soul. I feel the need to repent because I am a part of the system. ... But the reality is that there are a lot of things against you if you don't have the military [papers]."

Anabaptist theology: Even though Ricardo is unhappy that he needed to get his military papers, he continues to feel good about his efforts at the coalition. "My work reaffirms the importance of God. I see the Anabaptist theology, with its emphasis on community living, as an alternative for everyone," he said.

"The coalition is a platform to project what Mennonites have believed for so many years," he says. "Evangelism is done in living the values of the Bible—love, justice, respect, not going to war. Jesus gave food to the hungry, healed the sick, stopped Peter from using the sword. He had a clear message of a new life."

The coalition is open to people from religious or nonreligious backgrounds. "All people need an opportunity for new life," says Ricardo.

He has collected 150,000 to 200,000 signatures on a petition about the rights of COs. One million signatures are needed to bring the petition before the government for a vote. Ricardo estimates it will take him another two years to gather the rest of the signatures.

"The military is a big monster that steps hard on human rights," he says. "I want to continue to work until the CO status is a [legal] reality."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She traveled in Colombia in April 1994.

News

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MC conference moves toward expelling two MC/GC churches

Newton, Kan.—Two dual-affiliated congregations were marked for possible expulsion from the Illinois Mennonite Conference (IMC) of the Mennonite Church at sessions April 7-8 in Hopedale, Ill.

Oak Park (Ill.) Mennonite Church, and Maple Avenue Mennonite Church, Waukesha, Wis., were in effect placed on probation until 1996 because of their acceptance of gay and lesbian people as church members. In 1996 the congregations could be voted out of IMC membership.

The action came after Trinity Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill., said it would "abstain from membership" unless action was taken against Oak Park. Four meetings followed, in which the Oak Park and Maple Avenue churches met with Illinois congregations to discuss various viewpoints.

IMC's final resolution, which passed 82 to 43, states that "the ... practices of the Oak Park and Maple Avenue congregations have raised serious questions about [their] continued participation ... in the conference." It calls them to "review seriously whether it is right for them to continue" as IMC members. The proposal directs the IMC executive committee to take steps required by the IMC constitution to make possible in spring 1996 a delegate vote on whether to expel the churches.

Oak Park doesn't need another year, said congregation chair Fred Kniss. In the four meetings this year with Illinois congregations, Oak Park has grown to know them better, he said. Despite disagreements, "we came away with much more love and respect than we [had previously]. Yes, we want to be, we consider ourselves to be, part of the IMC family. ... If the family chooses to disown us, we'll have to deal with that. But we will not choose to leave this family."

Speaking against the proposal, some delegates described it as manipulative, self-righteous, hypocritical, legalistic, pharisaical. But others said they were motivated by compassion, that such an action was painful but necessary. "I pray that God's mercy is upon us all as we do this," said one.

Lawrence Kratz, co-pastor at Maple Avenue, in a later interview said, "It was very hard to be called ... a sexually immoral church. I don't believe that we are, but it seemed there was nothing we could do ... there wasn't a space for true dialogue to occur."

Kratz said he felt his church was made out to be something it was not, that the church was not trying to prove a point, but that kicking out a member of their church body was not an option for them.

The possible expulsions have ramifications for MC-GC integration, delegates noted. The IMC and General Conference's Central District Conference (CDC) share a conference minister and a youth minister. But differences in polity—by whom and how decisions are made in the church—have put integration discussions on hold, said IMC president Cal Kaufman.

CDC voted at sessions March 30-April 1 to begin a year-long dialogue process on issues of sexuality. Oak Park and Maple Avenue are both members of CDC. *Larry Penner with reports from Cathleen Hockman for* Gospel Herald

Worship, discussion planned for Wichita '95

Wichita, Kan. (GCMC/MC)—The largest Mennonite convention in six years will be held in Wichita this summer. Delegates from the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church, (MC) will worship together and make significant decisions—including deciding whether to integrate the two denominations—at Wichita '95 July 25-30.

The final recommendation from the MC/GC Integration Exploration Committee asks delegates to make "a

Inside the news

MCEC sorts relationships to conferences / p. 17

Paraguayan street children find help in Mennonite shelter / p. 19

Tom Rutschman recently won 25 airline tickets from Stockholm, Sweden, to Lima, Peru, worth $50,000. He proposed that Swedish young people would gain valuable insights by experiencing life in a Third World country. Rutschman, a Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Sweden, entered a contest by KLM Airlines for projects to build bridges between people in different countries. Rutschman suggested that students from the high school where he teaches be sent to help build a day-care center near Arequipa, Peru. A local Swedish municipality has donated $13,000 to buy building materials for the day-care center, and students have begun raising the $7,000 more necessary to complete the building. The trip is planned for June. Rutschman and his son Joel plan to be a part of the group.

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What to do with Mennonites serving in the military was the question that faced Mennonite Church leaders in Newport News, Va., March 17-18. Mennonite leaders met there to discuss the issue in an area where, by one estimate, one in three people is in the military or employed in military-related services as a civilian. An MC document from 1990 known as the "Tidewater Document" allows church membership to military members under certain conditions. This openness has concerned some in the Virginia Mennonite Conference and the larger Mennonite Church. "What impressed us," said Bishop Stan Maclin Sr. of the Richmond (Va.) Jubilee Christian Fellowship, "is that none of [the military-related people] were hatemongers or warmongers but displayed a genuine love for the Lord." Most participants agreed that military people should be allowed as members, but the church would expect that the person seek to leave military service. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and the Kansas Peace Institute will sponsor a school conflict mediation training workshop June 19-22 at the college. Contact Louise Hawkley at (316) 284-5217.

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Brethren/Mennonite Council and the Church of the Brethren Women's Caucus will host an event, "Dancing at the Wall: Re-Imagining the Church," June 25-26 in Charlotte, N.C. The meeting precedes the Church of the Brethren annual conference. For information contact BMC at Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406-0300, (612) 870-1501, e-mail mennojim@aol.com.

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The Pittsburgh Anabaptist Center for the Study of Culture and Religion and Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa., will host a conference, "Anabaptist Radicalism and Postmodern Publics," June 22-24 in Pittsburgh. Contact the Pittsburgh center at (412) 681-9988.

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Canada has decided to charge a "Right of Landing" fee of $975 to all newcomers to Canada. Although newcomers can apply for an interest-free loan to cover the fee, they must also demonstrate an ability to repay. "As people who benefited from a generous immigration policy years ago, we [Mennonites] should be especially sensitive to the plight of refugees and immigrants today," says Gloria Nafziger, Mennonite Central Committee Canada Refugee Concerns staff. "Unfortunately, many people who most need to find safety in Canada are the very ones who are least able to guarantee their ability to repay the loan."

commitment to move toward the integration of our two denominations." GC and MC delegates gave the green light to explore integration at their last joint convention, in 1989 in Normal, Ill.

The updated document states that "following decades of growing cooperation in a variety of denominational ministries, a strong convergence is developing in the vision, faith and practice of the two churches." Over 235 congregations are affiliated with both denominations.

Delegates will also be asked to approve a new version of the MC/GC Confession of Faith and to affirm a joint vision statement that calls for Mennonites "to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."

The meeting marks the third time GCs and MCs have gathered together. An estimated 3,500 adults are expected to attend. The event's theme is "Prepare the Way of the Lord," based on Isaiah 40.

MCs and GCs will hold joint business sessions July 25-26. Each will hold separate business sessions throughout the convention. The Conference of Mennonites in Canada will hold its annual sessions in Newton, Kan., July 23-25.

Wilma Bailey

John Neufeld

Presenters: Morning Bible study presenters include Wilma Bailey, assistant professor of Old Testament, Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., and John Neufeld, president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) in Winnipeg.

Preachers for evening worship include Renee Sauder, pastor at Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ont.; Mesach Krisetya, professor of pastoral counseling, Satja Wacana Christian University, Salatiga, Indonesia; Marilyn Miller, Boulder, Colo., director of outreach ministries for the GC Commission on Home Ministries; Nzash Lumeya, director of the International Missiology Center, Kinshasa, Zaire, and James M. Lapp, Elkhart, Ind., Mennonite Church general secretary.

Writer Mike Yaconelli, Yreka, Calif.,

Youth convention plans set

Wichita, Kan. (GCMC/MC)—A full slate is planned for youth at Wichita '95 July 25-30. The theme is "With Jesus on the Road."

Speakers include

- Hubert Brown, dean of students at Hesston (Kan.) College,
- Ruth Boehm, youth pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg,
- Mike Yaconelli, Yreka, Calif., editor of *The Door,*
- Mark Vincent, director of the MC/GC stewardship education project,
- June Alliman Yoder, professor of communication and preaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.,
- Tony Campolo, professor of sociology at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pa.,
- Noel Santiago, evangelism and church development staff member for Mennonite Board of Missions.

Other events include a concert by Christian musician Ken Medema, a youth talent show and a service project that will aim to build 20 new homes for low-income families and the elderly.

Preregistration by May 31 is required for the service project.

A sampling of seminar titles for youth includes: "Can You Be Hip and Holy?," "Dating a Non-Christian," "Homeless But Not Heartless," "If I Were Running the Church," "Love, Intimacy and Sex," "Singing Gospel" and "Worship Leading, Prayer and Spirituality."

Mike Yaconelli will lead a special seminar for youth sponsors.

For more information, contact the Youth Convention Office, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245, (219) 294-7523 or fax (219) 293-1892.

will be the featured speaker for the evening service for youth and adults. The closing worship Sunday morning July 30 will feature MC general secretary James M. Lapp.

Music: Mary Oyer, professor of church music at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and Bernie Neufeld, assistant professor of music at CMBC, will be the song leaders. Special music will include selections from Handel's *Messiah* and a recital of African-American spirituals by Tony Brown, Seattle. The musical *Godspell* will be presented a number of times, with tickets available at the convention. Arlo Kasper, drama professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., is the director.

Events: A new drama called *Fisheyes* also will be performed throughout the week. Written, acted and produced by Ted Schwartz and Lee Eschelman, the drama uses humor to portray the lives of disciples Peter and Andrew.

Participants will be able to learn more about the global church by visiting pavilions representing Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America on Wednesday evening July 26, and by participating in the celebration of Mennonite Central Committee's 75th anniversary on Saturday evening, July 29.

Over 90 seminars will be held. A sampling of seminar titles includes "Welcoming New Christians," "You Are What You Buy," "Talking about Tough Issues in Congregations," "Biblical Storytelling" and "Why in the World So Many Refugees?" Richard Blackburn, director of the Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center, will hold a day-long seminar July 27 on "Conflict Resolution for Congregations" for an $18 fee.

Two half-day tours and two full-day tours will visit sites such as an Old Order Amish community, Kauffman Museum, the Flint Hills and an emu ranch. The tours cost $17 to $26 per person. Preregistration is required.

Youth and adults may also preregister for a service project to help build 20 new homes and repair at least 50 homes for elderly and low-income families. One of the new homes will be built near Century II (the convention site). Anyone may make a donation toward the $400,000 needed for this project.

Separate programs will be offered for children (including infants and toddlers), junior high youth and youth. Activities will be planned for young adults. For more information see the Wichita '95 registration form available through your church or the General Conference office, (316) 283-5100. Registrations sent in by May 31 will receive a discount.

Eastern Canada churches sort out how to relate to conferences

Kitchener, Ont. (GCMC)—The executive committee of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada presented three main issues to delegates at their spring sessions April 7-8. All three addressed connections of MCEC to other levels of conference across North America.

First, the executive board proposed a "unified budget approach" in congregational giving to conferences. The giving patterns of the past two fiscal years will be used to set a proration to determine how much money goes to each conference.

Delegates unanimously approved the proposal. If adopted by most churches, a drop or increase in donations will be spread proportionately to all conferences. One effect, observed conference accountant Ester Neufeldt, could be to curb the recent trend of churches giving more to the confer-ence closest to home and less to those farther away.

Integration: The second issue involved some final steps toward the full integration of all MCEC churches with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. A year ago the Mennonite Church congregations of MCEC decided "in principle" to move from associate to full membership in CMC in July 1995, provided certain conditions were met.

One condition was to determine how much money would flow to CMC from the new member churches. Last summer the institutions involved agreed that $25,000 should go to Canadian Mennonite Bible College, rather than to U.S. colleges. The new funding formula adopted by delegates also addressed this condition.

Other conditions included (1) joining CMC as a conference rather than as individual congregations, (2) sorting out potential competition between Conrad Grebel College and Canadian

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Tamara Zuk, 8, lathers up with MCC-donated soap. She and her family left their home in Sarajevo, Bosnia, in May 1992 and are now refugees in a condemned building in Belgrade, Serbia. In 1994 MCC shared more than 230,000 pounds/103,000 kilograms of soap.

• • •

Guatemala is one of the world's worst long-term human rights violators, says the Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, an independent organization in Washington. Since 1960 in Guatemala an estimated 47,000 people have been "disappeared," 150,000 have been killed, 440 Mayan villages have been destroyed, 1 million Guatemalans have been internally displaced, and 250,000 Guatemalans have become refugees. "Almost all the human rights offices say violations have increased in 1994 and 1995," says Alice Zachmann, a Roman Catholic nun who directs the commission. "The increase may be an attempt to silence the voices wanting the peace process to move forward." From Feb. 22-25, the Guatemalan newspaper *Prensa Libre* reported 22 bodies found, mostly young men who had been tortured, says Zachmann.

Mennonite Bible College, (3) encouraging conferences to simplify their structures.

Delegates seemed satisfied with the executive board claim that all conditions "have been met or are in process." The MCEC churches now associate members of the Canadian conference will become full members (unless they deliberately opt out) at sessions July 23-25 in Newton, Kan.

Priority setting: The third issue brought by the executive board was an update on a priority-setting process for MCEC programs. The new element introduced into the two-year process is a packet called "A Time to Listen." This packet will be given to churches next fall. It includes information from all levels of conference and a chance for churches to help decide which programs should stay or be cut.

Budget: The finance commission reported a surplus of $22,700 from the past year, even though revenue was lower than expected. With staff vacancies during the year, expenses came in under budget.

The commission noted a new category in a list of trust funds: a $100,000 item tagged "MCEC contingency fund." The money is from undesignated estate donations. About a quarter of this fund will be used annually for special projects or to "smooth out" the budget, said the commission.

Delegates approved a 1995 budget of $1,513,000. They also approved a proposal that all participants in the conference pension plan contribute 5 percent of their income. Some had been contributing 4 percent.

Aaron Klassen, who just completed a term on the investment and property committee, challenged delegates to help pay off the $320,000 debt on the new conference office. He invited people to join a "company of 400," each committing $1,000 over five years.

Homosexuality: The Theological Concerns Council said it got over 50 evaluation forms after the Jan. 28 seminar on "Homosexuality and Christian faith." The most common negative comment was that conservative views were not as well represented as other views. Council members said they had trouble finding people or congregations to voice conservative views on the subject at the workshop.

An international conference for Christians in business is set for Moscow May 18-20. The conference is sponsored by the Moscow-based Association of Christians in Business in cooperation with Mennonite Economic Development Associates and others. The theme is "The Growth of Christian Ethics and Business in Russia." Contact Valerie Kroeker at MEDA, 1-800-665-7026.

• • •

Not all church agencies are feeling the budget crunch. Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services heard March 30-April 1 that nine months into their fiscal year, giving was up 7.6 percent over the previous year. The board adopted a $4.85 million budget for 1995-96, $350,000 more than the projected limit set six months ago.

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**More than 60 people met to discuss integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church April 6-8. The meeting at Mount Pleasant, Pa., was organized by a committee of eight who are dissatisfied with the integration exploration process. Though few participants said they were definitely opposed to integration, the dominant tone was one of concern. Speaking against merger, Theron Schlabach, professor of history at Goshen (Ind.) College, said that MCs' and GCs' different ways of "doing church" ought to be preserved. Evangelist Myron Augsburger of Harrisonburg, Va., said Mennonites should form a broader alliance that would do more than Mennonite World Conference does today. Integration Exploration Committee member George R. Brunk III, also of Harrisonburg, defended the merger exploration process as one in which the Holy Spirit has led. "This is not to suggest what the church should do," he said. "God led the committee; how God will lead the church is another matter."
(*Mennonite Weekly Review*)**

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Faith & Life Press, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

Some of the respondents wanted more biblical, theological and ethical reflection. Others suggested the topic should be "put on the back burner for the time being." Others suggested setting aside a day to pray. *Ron Rempel*

In Paraguay, shelter ministers to street children

Asuncion, Paraguay (MCC)—Thirty spirited street youngsters have found a home at El Abrigo, a Mennonite shelter for street children in Pelopincho, a slum by the river here.

Even more children come for portions of the day to the center that Mennonites in Paraguay opened in May 1993.

El Abrigo is one of only three shelters for street children in Asuncion, Paraguay's capital, and the only one to accept girls.

"The other shelters do not accept girls because these girls are particularly difficult to work with," says Nicole Durksen, the director of El Abrigo. "Their vulnerability on the street and their having seen the lives of their mothers, some of whom are forced into prostitution, make them particularly tough to discipline and love."

Despite—maybe because of—extra difficulties, Durksen and the shelter's other six staff members remain committed to these girls.

The children who call El Abrigo home receive food, shelter, health care, religious education and a chance to play. They also do daily chores and attend school.

"If the children are not too far behind other children their age, we arrange for them to go to the neighborhood school," Durksen says. "Some of the children, however, have never been to school or are too old for first grade; a teacher here at the center instructs them."

Twice a week the children enjoy organized crafts and Bible study. On Wednesdays those with enough good-behavior points go on a special outing. Once a month all the children go on a longer trip to see another part of the city.

On Sundays they attend Sunday school and worship at the Spanish Christian Missionary Alliance Church.

Christlicher Dienst, the service program of the Paraguayan Mennonite Church, opened the shelter in 1993 when a "circle of friends" of the Mennonite church decided to stop wringing their hands about the street children and instead do something.

Mennonite Central Committee helped with start-up funds; now local funding supports the shelter.
Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker

Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker (MCC)

New home: *Children at El Abrigo climb on MCC Serving and Learning Together workers Leslie Rutt, left, and Jeff Bontrager, right, both from Goshen, Ind. The children, left to right, are Veronica, Suni, Valentin, Juancito and Carolina (in front of Bontrager).*

Eden Mental Health Care Centre, Winkler, Man., will sponsor a workshop, "Mental Illness and Pastoral Care in the Congregation," June 2 in Winkler. Contact the center at (204) 325-4325.

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The Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale April 7-8 set an all-time high for proceeds by any relief sale. The sale raised $457,000 for Mennonite Central Committee. The Pennsylvania sale, March 31-April 1, raised $315,000. The West Coast sale, April 7-8, raised $186,000. The Nebraska sale, March 31-April 1, raised $150,000.

• • •

Christian Peacemaker Teams plans to send a team to Haiti for four months beginning in May. The team's mandate includes documenting cases of violence, intervening with officials and bringing cases to the attention of the Haitian media and to observers overseas. CPT maintained a presence in Jeremie, Haiti, for 18 months until January. CPT also plans to place a team in Hebron, West Bank, for four months beginning in June and is exploring possibilities for a second Project in Urban Peacemaking in Washington.

• • •

Six baby girls marked for death in India were rescued recently by a Christian organization in New Delhi. The children were born within the past year in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, where some villagers feed unwanted female children milk laced with poison. The six were saved through a new project set up by Amal De, who heads a New Delhi adoption service run by two mainline Protestant bodies. In one hospital in Madurai in southern India, of nearly 600 female births, an estimated 450 are infanticide victims, according to a 1994 report. The girls are unwanted because of the high cost of dowries. "The villagers do not see it as a sin to commit infanticide," De explained. (*Christian Century*)

Record

The Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) board of directors passed a preliminary FY 96 budget of $9.7 million at meetings March 2-4. The budget reflects a 5.68 percent increase.

• • •

MINISTERS

Mary Burkholder was ordained to her position as Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada executive secretary March 25. She had been licensed earlier for a previous pastoral assignment.

Terry Goertzen has resigned as associate/youth pastor at Cornerstone Church in Saskatoon, effective this summer.

Ken Tse will resign as pastor at Saskatoon Chinese Church in October.

WORKERS

Zander

Barbara Zander, Westminster, Md., began a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service assignment Jan. 7 as a records manager with AIDS Services of Dallas, Texas.

Christopher Dock Mennonite High School has the following full-time positions open for the 1995-96 school year: **director of guidance** and **math instructor**.

Send résumés or inquiries to **Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446-4398**.

Bluffton College seeks an **assistant director for administrative computing**. The assistant director will report directly to the director of administrative computing with primary responsibility of implementing and managing a newly purchased CMDS administrative software program developed for an AS/400 computer. The assistant director will also train other college personnel in the use of the CMDS program. Degree in computer science required with some business experience preferred. Applicants should have training and experience on an AS/400 computer, with an aptitude for quick learning of the CMDS program. Interviewing of candidates will occur in May with appointment to the position in early summer. Women and minority candidates are especially welcome.

Please forward letter of application, résumé and three letters of reference to **Willis Sommer, Vice President of Fiscal Affairs, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817**. Bluffton College is an equal opportunity employer.

Grace Community Church (Mennonite) in Chicago is looking for a **part-time pastor** primarily for Sunday preaching/teaching. Knowledge of the urban setting and Spanish language and culture are helpful.

Contact conference minister **Glen Horner at (815) 936-1234**.

The music department at **Goshen College** announces a half-time position in **piano and keyboard theory** for the 1995-96 academic year. The successful candidate should have a master's degree in piano pedagogy and/or performance and experience in both one-on-one and group instruction. The teaching assignment will include teaching elementary and intermediate level piano for adults and children and possibly piano pedagogy courses for undergraduates. Ability to offer instruction in either organ or harpsichord would be desirable. This position is offered as a one-year contract with potential for renewal. Additional employment in the Goshen College Piano Preparatory Program is possible, depending upon demand and the candidate's experience. Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**.

Mennonite Central Committee (Alberta) invites applications for the position of **executive director**. Duties include program leadership and supervision, communication with the constituency, staff supervision and office administration. Starting date is negotiable, but preferably no later than Jan. 1, 1996.

Please send applications, including résumés and salary expectations, and arrange for three letters of references to be sent directly, **by May 31**, to **M. Hunsberger, Personnel Committee, 8613—34 Ave. NW, Calgary, AB T3B 1R5; (403) 286-4613; e-mail: hunsberg@acs.ucalgary.ca**

Freeman Academy has the following positions open for the 1995-96 school year:

- **9 to 12 English**, full-time position, w/wo computer/accounting, w/ declam, yearbook, w/wo boys or girls basketball, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.
- **9 to 12 social science and physical education**, full-time position, w/wo computers/accounting, boys or girls basketball, athletic director, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.
- **9 to 12 science**, full-time position, w/wo computers/accounting, w/wo boys or girls basketball, w/wo athletic director, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.

Send résumé, credentials, transcripts to **Larry Horner, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029; (605) 925-4237**.

Grace Community Church (Mennonite) has a volunteer opportunity for **summer youth work in Chicago**. Housing and meals supplied in exchange for a short-term summer stint to help organize a neighborhood outreach program.

Leave message at **(312) 247-4782** for more information.

The **education department** at **Goshen College** announces a full-time, one-year position for the 1995-96 academic year. The teaching load includes reading (developmental reading and reading problems, children's literature), early childhood (learning environments and child development) and supervision of elementary student teachers. Doctorate in education preferred; master's degree required with study in literacy, early childhood and elementary education. Teaching experience in elementary classrooms is required. Responsibilities include teaching classes and supervising student teachers; arranging supervising field experiences for courses; participating with education faculty in curriculum development; involvement in research, development and service in local school communities and in professional organizations; and participating in the life of the college community. Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

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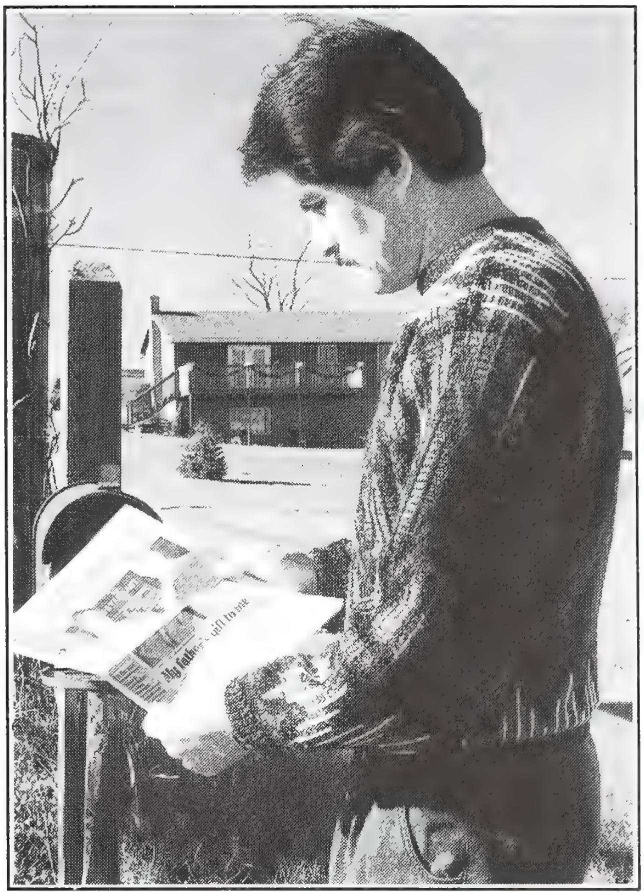
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—New York

✻ **Alex** was turned off on Christianity. But as he was reading Together he was struck by an ad on Muscular Christianity. So he took his wife and two young sons to the church that mailed out TOGETHER. He found an authentic Christianity he was looking for and is now a committed Christian. Currently he is taking up a 2-year pastoral ministry program to prepare himself to help other drug addicts like himself.
—Ohio

✻ **The Dettrey family** moved into an area where a Mennonite church was sending out Together in neighborhood homes. They thought the Mennonites wouldn't accept us— "they're a closed group." But after a couple years they decided to test the friendly invitation from Together. They were surprised and welcomed! Now John and Helen are both editors of Together for that church. *—Pennsylvania*

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BOOKS

THE PACIFISM OF THE JEWS

The Challenge of Shalom: The Jewish Tradition of Peace and Justice, *edited by Murray Polner and Naomi Goodman (New Society Publishers, 1994, 278 pages)*

Reviewed by Mitchell Brown, Wilmette, Ill.

Mennonite theology has been peace theology for many years. You might wonder if there is anything new to say on this subject.

The Challenge of Shalom, a collection of Jewish writings on peace, should silence such wondering. This book represents an exciting new perspective on peace issues.

This perspective is particularly important in that Jewish experience of pacifism has been quite different from Mennonite experience. Jews have had to face questions of peace and war in this century in a far more intimate way than have Mennonites.

While at one time Mennonites risked their lives to bear such witness, this has not normally been the case in 20th-century North America. The situation has been otherwise for Jews. One might even say that the notion of a Jewish pacifist is oxymoronic. Or as this book asks in its very first paragraph, "How was it possible … for a Jew to be nonviolent, especially after the Holocaust?"

The answer is yes, it is possible, and the book takes the reader on a survey through Jewish tradition showing where strength for such a position can be found.

Beginning with Jeremiah, who refused to fight the Babylonians, continuing with Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai, who refused to fight Rome and culminating in the tens of thousands martyred by the Church in the Middle Ages, Judaism reveals a tradition of nonresistance in the face of evil.

The heart of the book, though, comes in sections where a peace witness confronts the Holocaust and the wars for Israel's survival. There are no easy answers here. Jews who would be pacifists today must risk their lives. Their writings should be of interest to all in the Mennonite church.

A CENTRAL DISTRICT HISTORY

Walking Together in Faith: The Central District Conference, 1957-1990, *edited by Elaine Sommers Rich (Central District Conference, 1993, 284 pages)*

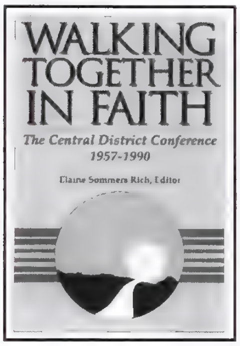
Reviewed by Gordon Oyer, Champaign, Ill.

To mold a coherent story from a jumble of multiauthored essays is daunting. This task proves especially complicated when the authors narrate recent history in which they were intimate players, since advantages of chronological and emotional distance are missing.

However, in *Walking Together in Faith*, editor Elaine Sommers Rich meets this challenge. As good histories can, this volume helps clarify the identity and chronicle the activities of this Midwestern church body.

Themes of congregational polity and tolerating differences recur among the overviews of Central District Conference institutional support and constituent congregational activity. Given these, the book predictably devotes more space to congregational development, composition and life than to conference structure and institutions. Though sometimes incomplete, its reviews of congregational dynamics provide readers a frame of reference to reflect upon their own congregation's experience. Numerous appendices of data and documents offer additional details about the people, events and topics summarized in the text.

Interpretation of details is uneven, but efforts to explore social and cultural context are beneficial. One wishes, though, that the dynamics of balancing conference organization with congregational polity were fleshed out more. If congregations are "boss" and diversity among congregations is welcomed, do criteria and policy for guiding conference-initiated church-planting efforts come from selected constituent congregations, conference leadership or specialized staff?


WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH
The Central District Conference
1957-1990
Elaine Sommers Rich, Editor

Also, though it conscientiously devotes a chapter to congregational withdrawals, the reader wishes for a few more details to illuminate further the varied responses to specific with-

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drawals. Limits to congregational autonomy apparently do exist, but those limits are unclear.

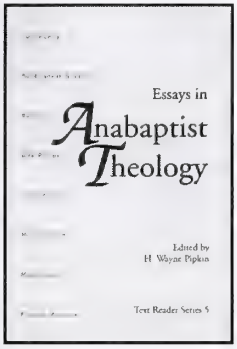
Still, as Mennonite bodies pursue integration, this book becomes a valuable resource to help us understand the strengths and weaknesses, similarities and differences the Central District Conference will offer future unions.

OF THE EARLY ANABAPTISTS

Essays in Anabaptist Theology, *edited by H. Wayne Pipkin (Institute of Mennonite Studies, Elkhart, Ind., 1994, 271 pages)*

Reviewed by Daniel Liechty, Philadelphia

This collection brings together mainly previously published essays that speak to the uniqueness of "Anabaptist theology." A basic enigma in contemporary Mennonite theology is that it is formulated almost exclusively by historians and biblical scholars. Mennonites whose expertise is in theology proper are left on the periphery. This has been reflected in past IMS publications and unfortunately continues with this book.


Essays in
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Edited by
H. Wayne Pipkin
Text Reader Series 5

Most of these essays are familiar and widely cited. Of most interest are the new essays, especially those of Arnold Snyder and John Roth. These writers understand that what they do as historians has rather direct relevance for 20th-century Mennonite theology.

The idea of a unique Anabaptist theology has been a close companion to the thesis of a single point of origin ("monogenesis") in Switzerland for the early Anabaptist movement. That view has been replaced in recent years by the idea of "polygenesis"—the Swiss Brethren, Hutterites and Dutch Mennonites were originally distinct movements in terms of geography, spirit and theology.

In the paradigm of monogenesis, the relationship between history and theology was clear. There is a "pure" Anabaptism in the 16th century, and historical figures could be judged according to how well they measured up to that ideal image. Likewise, in the 20th century there is a pure core of Mennonite belief by which the faith and practice of contemporary Mennonites can also be judged. What happens when, in the new paradigm, we acknowledge diversity, pluralism and even mutual recrimination and excommunication at the very heart of Anabaptist origins?

Both Snyder and Roth attempt to move "beyond polygenesis" in suggesting a unity to the early Anabaptists that is even more instructive than the diversity. Snyder suggests a continuum approach to Anabaptist theology. While we would not expect complete agreement on any of the main theological issues, we do see among early Anabaptists a spectrum of belief that itself has a certain coherence.

Roth looks mainly at the question of community hermeneutics for biblical interpretation. His suggestion that we pay even closer attention than we have to the historical context in which early Anabaptists read their Bibles might, in fact, help us understand why such diversity existed among these Anabaptists on even fundamental theological issues. Roth, therefore, strengthens the approach suggested by Snyder.

While Snyder's approach is progressive, many will have problems with a method that excludes from consideration such important figures as Hans Bunderlin, Hans Denck, Obbe Phillips and Adam Pastor. Snyder should acquaint himself more deeply with the Anabaptism of Poland, Silesia and Transylvania before assuming the legitimate end points for the continuum of Anabaptist theology.

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- **MCC model railroad boxcars** are available for sale through the mail and have been at relief sales. Old and new versions of the boxcar are available in both N and HO scales from (U.S. orders) 9821 Oboe, Houston, TX 77025; or (Canadian orders) 14 Grey Owl Drive, Elmira, ON N3B 1S5. N-scale is $20 (old style) or $18 (new style); HO-scale is $15 for either version; add $4.50 for shipping.
- **No Hands But Ours**, a 13-minute video, follows the chain of hands that provides Mennonite Central Committee material resources. One segment follows a shipment of MCC comforters and clothing to Zaire. Available for free loan from your nearest MCC office or from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381; for purchase from MCC Akron, $15 U.S./$20 Cdn.
- **Restorative Justice: Making Things Right** is a 22-minute video discussing the limitations of the criminal justice system and presenting an alternative in the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program. Discussion guide included. Available for free loan from your nearest MCC office, or for purchase from MCC Akron, $20 U.S./$25 Cdn.
- **We Are the Pharisees** by Kathleen Kern (Herald Press, 1995, $9.95 U.S./ $14.20 Cdn.) suggests we identify ourselves with the Pharisees, instead of denouncing them, so we can address the pride, hypocrisy and legalism in our own lives and churches.
- **The Clashing Worlds of Economics and Faith** by James Halteman (Herald Press, 1995, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn.) shows areas of conflict between Western capitalism and Kingdom values and explores how we can interact with a system with different values from our own.
- **This Do in Remembrance of Me: History of Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kansas, 1895-1995** by Jerome K. Waltner (Wordsworth, 1995) is available from Eden Mennonite Church, Box 406, Moundridge, KS 67107; $21 U.S. (includes shipping).

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Editorial

Welcome the wounded

We live in a world full of wounded people. These people are searching for safe places to share their stories and move toward healing. One of our tasks as churches is to be places of healing, where we welcome rather than turn away people with wounds.

Last November I spoke with four survivors of sexual abuse who found their way to the same congregation. One of them had grown up in that church, but the others had come, mainly or partly, because East Goshen (Ind.) Mennonite Church was known to welcome such survivors. It takes great courage for these survivors to share their stories. Having been so deeply violated, they need a place of safety in order to be vulnerable enough to say what happened to them. For male survivors it is even more difficult because of the cultural stereotypes against men being vulnerable.

Talking about our wounds by itself will not bring healing, but it is a first step in bringing our pain to God and allowing God's healing power to touch us.

As I spoke with these women and with the pastoral leadership of that congregation, I realized that such welcoming was not something done lightly or easily. Not everyone agreed with how welcoming to be, and most found it a struggle to listen to these women's heart-rending stories.

This summer the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church will decide whether or not to adopt a resolution called "Vision: Healing and Hope." This statement calls us "to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."

We will be tempted to simply adopt this statement in theory. It sounds so good. But we must pay attention to what it means. Being communities that allow God's healing and hope to flow through us will require that we, like East Goshen, welcome wounded people, whether the wounds are physical, psychological or spiritual. It means we must face our own wounds; otherwise we will not be able to extend God's healing to others.

Survivors of sexual abuse are a particular challenge to our call to be healing communities. These wounds are the result of sins we don't like to talk about, like incest or rape. These wounds are not easily or quickly healed. Band-Aids do little more than hide the wound for a moment. We cannot simply "forgive and forget," as Isaac Block shows us (see page 12).

Such wounds will require listening to the wounded over and over. We will need patience, endurance, fearlessness. In short, we will need to demonstrate God's love.

Jesus is our example. Much of his ministry involved healing. Much of God's work concerns healing, as the vision and goals statement recognizes. Variations of the word "heal" occur 168 times in the Bible and Apocrypha.

Healing communities: Despite this strong biblical theme, we give little attention to being healing communities. One reason may be that we don't feel adequately healthy ourselves. If we do not feel safe enough in our congregations to share our own wounds—and we all have wounds—we will not be able to listen to others. When someone talks about their hurts we may often feel threatened and fear that it will awaken hurts within us that we don't want to face.

Dawn Bontrager-Lehman, a survivor (see pages 3-6), says of David Miller, a former pastor at East Goshen, "He didn't judge me, but he wasn't afraid of me either." I know David, and I imagine that since he has faced his own wounds and shortcomings he is less threatened by someone else's. He knows that God is the one who heals; his job is to listen and not add further weight to the person's burden by judging them harshly.

Talking about our wounds by itself will not bring healing, but it is a first step in bringing our pain to God and allowing God's healing power to touch us. We are called to be communities where God's healing and hope can happen. Let us approach that call with our eyes open. We must learn to bring our own wounds and the wounds of others to Jesus, the Wounded Healer. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

110: 10
MAY 23, 1995

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- All good gifts around us (see page 5)
- What do you do with a $5 bill? (see page 6)
- Upside-down economics (see page 8)

MONEY

servant or master?

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Prologue

Money and how it is used is touched on often in the Bible, but that topic seems to be a no-no in our churches. We may discuss our church budget, and we look at the pastor's salary. But how many of us discuss our own income and spending practices with our brothers and sisters in Christ?

I don't know—or don't trust—anyone who presents easy answers to the question of how to be faithful stewards of our wealth. In this issue you will find various approaches to the question. Scott Brubaker-Zehr, fresh back to Canada from four years in Colombia, gives a personal account of his struggle against "the forces of consumerism" (see page 3).

Ann Marie Minter (see page 5) helps us see that all good gifts in our lives—whether people or things—come from our Creator and are not ours to possess.

Ellen Kroeker reports an interesting experiment that her congregation took part in (see page 6). It shows how creative we can be when challenged.

In a time when many people think we in North America are giving too much foreign aid, James Harder presents a corrective (see page 8).

Sara Wenger Shenk (see page 10) writes about the need for our churches to support parents better.

Eddy Hall's Bible study (see page 11) is a parable about "the family with the strange habit."

And J.B. Miller offers his view of determining how much is enough (see page 12). *gh*

Next issue: Mennonites in the city

Cover: Design by John Hiebert

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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All I want to do is have some fun

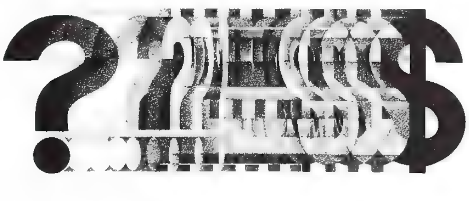
Scott Brubaker-Zehr

How can we resist our consumerist culture and live more meaningful lives?

Not long after I returned home from Colombia I heard a mesmerizing song on the radio that went, "All I want to do is have some fun . . . I've got a feeling I'm not the only one." It drew from me a strange mix of attraction and repulsion. The lyrics were so unapologetically shallow and materialistic, yet the music, the style and the honesty appealed to me. I couldn't get it out of my head.

Perhaps it speaks to me and the dilemmas I face. I'm back from the stresses and strains of working in a Third World country, and a part of me is glad to be back enjoying the comforts of home. "All I want to do is have some fun." No more dangerous streets, no more late-night conversations about insoluble problems, no more life-threatening taxi rides, no more walking by poor beggars on the street. Now that I'm back in Canada, a part of me is content to relax and hum along with the song.

But another part of me is restless. Something is wrong with this song. Part of me rebels against it. It's too shallow and materialistic. It's escapist and selfish. Seeking my own comfort doesn't satisfy me. I've developed a taste for something deeper and more lasting, yet I'm caught between conflicting emotions: the desire for the comfort that numbs and the desire for the life and depth that enlivens. "I've got a feeling I'm not the only one."



Purpose and drama: We as a North American church are in a serious struggle over stewardship and lifestyle. We have bought into the North American culture with its consumerist values, but a part of us knows we want something more. We want to find depths of meaning, we want to lead lives with a sense of purpose and drama. We want to grow spiritually and feel the joy of sacrifice and commitment. But to do this, we have to battle the forces that seek to numb us, the forces of consumerism and narcissism that tell us our highest calling is to have fun and be comfortable.

How can we resist them? We need to go inward and get in touch with that part of us that rebels against the shallowness and materialism of our culture; with that part of us that wants a deeper, more meaningful life. We need to be honest about the conflict between our Christian identity and our non-Christian culture. We need to pay attention to those voices that ask, Are you really living your life to the fullest? Is your life making a difference in the world? Do you know the

Buying and consuming is like a narcotic that numbs us to our Christian identity and mission.

Breaking bud

Suzanne Lawrence

Bless God Bless God
for a slim striped dirt-colored frog
in the first flush of deadnettle, milkweed
and bindweed unmaking the hollyhock bed.

Bless God Bless God
for the first mourning dove,
a scissortail flycatcher calm on the fence
and a cardinal crazy with the pulse of a branch in his grasp.

Bless God Bless God
for blades and sprays
of runner-rooted grass homesteading the edge
of the warming crushed-fossil laden road.

Bless God Bless God
for an old exposed nest
luring me near to touch unfolded leaves
in the last local species of tree to break bud.

Suzanne Lawrence lives near Goessel, Kan.

S.W. Oswald

joy that transcends all understanding?

Our consumerist culture tries to get our minds off such questions. It tries to make us "comfortable." Buying and consuming is like a narcotic that numbs us to our Christian identity and mission. We can soothe ourselves with new purchases and occupy our time with buying and operating the latest technology. The advertising and the products keep us on the surface and prevent us from deepening our commitment to the way of Christ. Making money and spending it on our own comfort makes us happy in a way, but it's not what we're looking for. We long for something more lasting, like the woman at the well who wanted that living water that would finally quench her thirst. We're thirsty, but we are numbed by distractions.

How can we resist these powerful, consumerist forces? It isn't easy to do alone. One thing our family has tried to do since we have returned home is seek out counsel on these issues. We have found it helpful to be open about our purchases with friends at church. We debated whether to buy a TV. It was helpful to have the perspective and counsel of others.

It has also been helpful to build friendships with people from other cultures who have fewer economic resources than we do. Our Salvadoran friends who live across the street are a constant reminder to us of another land and another reality. Many things we take for granted are seen as luxuries by our brothers and sisters overseas. We also keep in touch with our Mennonite friends in Colombia. When I hear about the work and struggles there, I realize that my money could be used in many places other than for my own comfort. I also realize that my money is a powerful resource that can contribute to exciting projects.

These relations remind me of how I need to change with respect to money. I need to be challenged on new ways to spend. I also need to be accountable on how I budget. We all need to talk about these issues in order to be faithful. We need to talk in church. It's scary because it is a touchy subject. Our finances expose our true priorities. How we use our money shows more about our commitments than perhaps anything else.

Scott Brubaker-Zehr and Mary, his wife, returned to Waterloo, Ont., last June after serving more than four years in Colombia with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Our freedom comes in allowing these gifts we enjoy to come and go in our lives, recognizing that it has been our privilege (and not our right) to know them.

All good gifts around us

Ann Marie Minter

In this day of child custody, People's Court and wailing car alarms, it's easy to slip into a never-ending spiral of thinking that we actually own things in this world and have the right to own them.

The Scriptures tell us that every good and perfect gift comes from God (James 1:17). Society brainwashes many of us into thinking that we deserve the good things we have, that we have "earned" them, that we have a right to keep them. But we are deluded. Sometimes the good things are taken away in ways we can't control: a totaled car, a layoff from a job, the loss of a loved one.

I remember when my oldest brother was a fire fighter in the pine forests of Colorado. He flew in a helicopter over blazing wildfires, dumping giant buckets of water down close to the flames. "We have to trust he knows he's doing the right thing," Dad told me when I was just 12. "We also know that he's been given to us, and it's not up to us when he's taken away."

We must never forget that every person who becomes important to us is a gift—not deserved, not to be possessed. We should not control their sense of self or their sense of space, for selfhood is something that belongs to each of us. Harriet Lerner writes in her book *The Dance of Intimacy*, "Our goal should be to have relationships with others that do not operate at the expense of the self, and to have a self that does not operate at the expense of others."

It is when we treat people, especially the ones we hold most dearly, as gifts that we can fully appreciate them for the individuals they are and can let go of them if and when we need to.

At a pizza place in Oklahoma City my pastor clenched her fist on the table, showing me her idea of possession. "I'm trying to work with the image of holding things lightly," she said in her soft Southern drawl. Her thin hand released its grip. "I still hold whatever I care about, but I don't smother it."

We do not own the people and things that come into our lives; they are gifts from our Creator.

We know that God cares for us, gives us good things and gives us people to enrich our lives and help us come to wholeness. It's understanding the temporal nature of the world around us that makes everything and everyone more important and more special. Our freedom comes in allowing these gifts we enjoy to come and go in our lives, recognizing that it has been our privilege (and not our right) to know them.

Our bodies, too, are gifts, described in the Scriptures as "holy temples." We should have a reverence for them and remember that they are also temporal and need to be treated with care, as one would treat a friend.

On a beach by a lake shore a friend and I sat by a crackling fire as the sun was setting. "Sometimes it seems life goes better even when I don't pray," he said, scratching his beard and looking into the fire. We talked it over and discussed the idea that all good things come from God, whether we ask for them or not.

Our Creator showers us with blessings and good gifts. And God waits with anticipation to welcome our thankful hearts.

Ann Marie Minter lives in Colorado Springs, Colo.

A stranger teaches a congregation that God wants our talents, our time and our money.

What do you do with

Ellen Kroeker

Two $5 bills fluttered from the clip on the refrigerator door. They were not mine, and they had been bothering me for several weeks now. A character interrupted our Sunday service several weeks earlier and handed every person there what he called a test paper, a $5 bill. "It's God's money," he said. "It's up to you to decide what to do with it."

This character had visited our church before. He's a bold, eccentric guy who times his visits with our pastor's forgetful episodes. The pastor can't find his sermon notes or is struck by the absence of his wallet, rushes out and is unexplainably delayed in returning. Taking advantage of his disappearance, this stranger strolls up to the front. He looks like he just came off the road, wearing an old sweatshirt, a red bandana on his head, a backpack slung across one shoulder.

While our pastor often talks of our inner pilgrimage of spiritual growth and nourishment, this stranger is a traveler and often wants to talk of the outward journey Christians are taking. We're a tolerant congregation and listen to his views. But that Sunday, when he pulled out a stack of bills and handed them out, most of us moved beyond bemused tolerance and got excited.

He told us he would return on Nov. 20, 1994, the Sunday before Thanksgiving, to hear what we had chosen to do. The focus of the Scripture that day was the parable of the talents, and our interrupting stranger described the servants as savers, investors and entrepreneurs. Savers sit on what they have; investors get a modest return; entrepreneurs go for broke with time, money and energy.

I get the point, I thought. To be a good performer on this $5 test, I needed to get a big return. Then the man talking took an unexpected turn. "God is an entrepreneur." This was going too far. I'm tired of all aspects of life being reduced to economic terms —not in the spiritual realm, too.

Creation and risk: He developed his analogy. God made an investment in the creation of this world. But in giving his son to die for this investment, he went for broke, risking all with no assurance that people would respond. To think of entrepreneurship as creation and risk, not as some economic hat-trick, startled me. We are made in God's image. Are we following God in taking risks, in being creative, in that sort of boldness?

My daughter considered what she could do. The pressure mounted as a first-grader sold lemon bars, a family sold homemade greeting cards, and a brother-sister team took orders for cookies. I talked with my daughter, who is certain she is meant to be a writer. Is it a good gift to God for her to complete and share one of her stories with the children of the church? It is not a return of money for money, but it is a use of her talents. She mulled it over.

I thought about my talents. I teach. On occasion, I write. I talk, though that's more a liability than a talent, I decide. What talent do I have but have not used much? Is being hospitable a talent? Do I want to invite more strangers to my table? As if on cue, a radio interview with a British poet came on as I made pies for the church Thanksgiving dinner. Sir Stephen Spender was talking about the compulsion of writers to write and said it is a New Testament view that a person has talents and that he or she is responsible to use those talents. It

A grade school teacher let the money inspire a project that helped her students recognize and increase their kindness to each other and buy food for the food bank.

$5 bill?

Ellen Kroeker

'We are not meant to travel alone': *"Pilgrim" (the church's pastor, Roger Neufeld Smith, left) and "Sojourner" (associate pastor Cynthia Neufeld Smith)*

doesn't even matter how good the performance is by the world's standards. The responsibility is to use those talents.

The morning of Nov. 20 was dark and chilly with reams of rain. Yet church was festive. It was a harvest celebration with the good scents of turkey and casseroles coming from the church kitchen and a curiosity about what the harvest would be from our test papers.

The rain continued to fall, and someone thanked God for it. We sang and heard good music. Some shared what they did or were doing with their $5 bill test papers. A grade school teacher let the money inspire a project that helped her students recognize and increase their kindness to each other and buy food for the food bank. Some put the $5 bill in the offering plate; another spent his at a hardware store buying parts to fix power windows. The job retails for $140. He did it for $75 parts and labor, saving the customer $65 and earning a profit of $70 for the church. Many bought ingredients or supplies and made and sold items at the Christmas bazaar. A father and his 5-year-old son bought watermelon seeds to raise watermelons the next summer and bring the profit to church. One man said he was attracted to the Scripture about casting bread upon the waters. He put the $5 in an envelope with the message, "This is God's money. Use it to get out of a jam. When you are out of your jam, put $5 back in the envelope, sign your name. Give it to someone else who's in a jam." He gave it to a hitchhiker on the way to Kansas City.

Inner journeys: For our offering we carried papers to the front, papers on which we had written what we were doing. Some used it to help their inner journeys by buying Bible study guides; a teenager bought ingredients and made supper for her working parents; another put it toward shoes for a needy friend's children. My daughter brought her story forward. A family decided to go to San Antonio, Texas, to serve the needy at Thanksgiving.

The stranger was back. He called himself "Pilgrim." He even brought his traveling companion, Sojourner, because, he said, we are not meant to travel alone. He talked of risks and said we could flop at some of these ventures. If the emphasis is on helping humanity, a flop can lead to discouragement or even despair. But if we do what we do for God, then the exact outcome does not always have to be a success in human terms. The ointment the woman gave Jesus (see Luke 7:37ff.) was not the most practical or cost-effective, in human terms. But it was a gift to God, as can be our talents, our money, our time.

Pilgrim left us with three questions: Whose money (and by implication, time and talent) is it? "God's," was Pilgrim's firm answer. What are we going to do with it? That is for us to answer. Who is this activity for? Pilgrim encouraged us to do it for God.

Ellen Kroeker, who lives in Lawrence, Kan., attends Southern Hills Mennonite Church in Topeka, Kan.

Upside-down economics

Contrary to what most people think, poorer countries are sending more money to wealthier countries than what they receive.

James M. Harder

The return flow of wealth from poor countries of the South to richer countries of the North is becoming the hallmark of the international economic system.

The image of foreign aid is normally one of rich countries transferring resources to poor countries. Yet more and more voices in the North are calling for an end to such aid because every dollar is needed to fight "our own problems at home." This, despite the fact that only 44/100ths of one percent of the Canadian Gross Domestic Product and a mere 19/100ths of one percent of the American GDP ever leave our countries in the form of foreign aid.

The popular image of enormous sums of money flowing only from North to South could not be more wrong. Yes, \$55-\$60 billion of public and private development money flows each year from the North to the South, about half of it in World Bank lending. But for several years already, even greater sums of money in the form of interest and repayment of borrowed funds have been flowing from South to North.

In the words of development expert Bruce Rich, we live in "an upside-down world where the poor increasingly bankroll the rich: net capital flows from the South to the North were running at a rate of \$50 billion a year in the late 1980s."

In part this represents the so-called "solution" to the Third World debt crisis that multinational banks have proclaimed. The funds are indeed coming back—often faster than new money is going out. The World Bank's own projections for the first half of the 1990s show \$3 billion more per year returning to the Bank from its developing members than will be issued to them in new credits. This is foreign aid in reverse, yet few citizens of the North even know it is happening.

Perhaps most tragically, to generate this amount of foreign currency for loan repayment, the world's poorest countries have clear-cut and sold huge tracts of their forests, evicted millions of small family farmers from land to make room for export-oriented agricultural production and turned a blind eye to environmental management issues that appeared to stand in the way of raw economic growth.

The appearance of "aid fatigue" in the North couldn't come at a worse time for much of Africa, where the world's lowest living standards have created a need for a new descriptive label: the Fourth World.

Some argue that trade opportunities in the free-trade world of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs will be Africa's salvation. Quite the contrary. GATT's free-trade mandates strip the poorest countries of the few trade concessions they now enjoy. As the *Wall Street Journal* acknowledges, "Free-market agreements often lead to the survival of the fittest," and Africa, which has never developed a varied manufacturing base, will simply be unable to take advantage of GATT opportunities.

James M. Harder chairs the department of economics and business administration at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. His article is excerpted from a longer article in The Marketplace *(January/February issue).*

'We are all guilty'

An anecdote recounted by Geraldine Harder

In the 1800s a thin-looking man, William John Turnbright, was brought into a London courtroom. He looked tired and worn, as old as the coat he wore, which was much too big for him.

"You stole a loaf of bread yesterday," the judge said. "Why?"

The man answered, "My wife is sick and I have two small children. I cannot find work, and we needed food, so I took the bread. The baker had so many loaves, and I knew some would lan in the garbage. In my Bible I read that those who have should give to those who don't have. We usually share even the little we have. But yesterday we had nothing, Your Honor. How long must we wait until someone gives something to us?"

The judge waited, then said, "Mr. Turnbright, stealing is wrong. You must pay five pounds." Then he pulled a five-pound note out of his wallet. "This is your fine," he told the father. "I have paid it for you." Then he said to everyone in the courtroom, "We have many laws, but there is a universal moral law. We are all guilty if we don't love and help the poor. Who will pay the man back for all we owe him?"

People put notes and coins into a container that was passed around.

William John Turnbright stared at the overflowing container. The trusting father was given much by those who had much to give.

Geraldine Harder lives in North Newton, Kan.

Letters

MORE ABOUT COMMUNION

You asked for readers to tell you what they think about Communion practices. Our adult Christian education class at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., discussed the Lord's Supper for two Sundays. One Sunday we looked at the Scriptures referring to this practice, and the next we discussed the Feb. 28 issue of *The Mennonite*. The following remarks are my own, not necessarily the opinions of the class.

I developed a deeper appreciation for this celebration and for the diversity in our Mennonite churches and in the worldwide Christian church. I hope discussion will result in a celebration of diversity, not a polarization. The number of times a year, the question of who can participate and how we celebrate (agape meal, foot washing, solemnly or exuberantly) add a richness to the fabric of our church life. Let's not spoil the pattern by trying to regiment it or make it "one size fits all." *Elvina N. Martens, Elkhart, Ind.*

Thank you for the issue on Communion (Feb. 28). Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18) gave us the first recorded Communion. Typical of the Old Testament, this Eucharist was ritualized. Jesus teaches us in the New Testament that Communion occurs as part of a religious fellowship, the last seder. The Old Testament injunction against graven images and the New Testament call to go beyond the law and ritual teach us much about Communion.

Too many Christian denominations have become iconic because of their dependence on symbolism and ritualism. People are led to put their faith in the sacramental purveyor rather than the Lord and in the magic of the ritual rather than attempting to live the life of Christ. Satan tempts us with imagery for the mind as well as materialism for the body.

We must discard our symbols and rituals (mental possessions) and join one another in intimate inclusive fellowship breaking bread, drinking wine, and sharing our thoughts as well as our possessions. Potlucks and Passover seder may be the most Christian occasions for Communion. *Richard W. Burnett, Salina, Kan.*

RICH ALSO RESPONSIBLE

Re the letter to the editor, "Political Bias Shows" (March 14 issue), the phrase, "reform the welfare system to make recipients responsible for their own behavior," is one of those statements that sounds good on the surface but lacks insight into the complexity of the capitalistic system. The reasons for poverty are not only abuses of the system on the part of the poor but also on the part of industry.

On a recent excursion to the mall, I noticed my friend, Henrietta, having lunch, so I sat down to chat with her. She told me of the expenses connected with treatment for her illness. When I ventured that her health insurance would cover a portion of the costs, she told me her husband had taken $100 less salary per month at Morrell's (South Dakota's largest employer) so that she would be covered by health insurance for the rest of her life. Now Morrell's has opted to cut off all retirement health insurance. The courts upheld this decision.

Who is responsible? Will Morrell's repay the $100 per month that had been deducted from her husband's salary? Won't Henrietta be pushed into poverty through no fault of her own? The need for responsible behavior belongs to the rich as well as the poor. Eliminating abuses of the system must include the rich as well as the poor. When have you heard of a CEO taking a cut so that his or her employees/retirees could earn a living wage? Working toward equity, as suggested by Larry Lange's letter to the editor (March 14 issue) is an innovative idea that should be explored. *Helen R. Tieszen, Sioux Falls, S.D.*

THE MENNONITE SCHOOL

In your article "Hope in a Dry and Weary Land" (March 28 issue, page 7), you say the Arab Evangelical Elementary School is run today by Palestinians. The school began in 1954 as a Mennonite Central Committee project. That is why it is still known as "the Mennonite school." In 1967 MCC terminated its work in Hebron. At that time the Arab Evangelical Episcopal Church Council in Jerusalem took over the project but gave no financial support. It then was called the Arab Evangelical Orphanage for Boys. In 1982 Holy Land Ministries, with headquarters in Tulsa, Okla., took over the school. The name was again changed, to Arab Evangelical Home and School. The teachers are all Palestinian, but the school is run by Holy Land Ministries. Bible Lands Society from England also provides financial support through its sponsorship program.

We were in the United States during February. Thank you for visiting the school. Sorry we missed you. *Irvin and Susan Voth, Hebron, West Bank*

LET GOD JUDGE

In response to articles and actions regarding homosexuality ("Leaders Work at Issue of Homosexuality," Feb. 14 issue) I want to say that passing any resolutions or policies regarding sexuality is a no-win situation. Having just read the Old Testament through again this spring, I am convinced that one cannot set policy using that reference as a guide since it is a cultural and social interpretation by Jews of their perception of God's will for them. We live in different and more enlightened times, having Christ's instructions.

If we follow Christ's teaching we have some specifics on how we should relate to fellow human beings that may apply. In Matthew 19:19 and 22:39 it is recorded that Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." God is love; that is the heart of the gospel. He also instructed us, "Do not judge others so God will not judge you; God will judge you in the same rule you apply to others" (Matthew 7:1-2). I do not want to have judgment passed on me because I judged someone else's lifestyle. The whole issue is still too much a mystery.

The issue is too divisive. We should include all that wish to fellowship with fellow Christians, be supportive and be loving. If God does not approve of homosexuality, God can judge those people in his own way when they come to him in a final judgment. That kind of assessment isn't ours to make. Let's concentrate on the things that bind us together.

I have always been impressed with the openness and the inclusive, caring fellowship of the Minneapolis and St. Paul Mennonites. If one is going to go

continued on next page

LETTERS *continued from previous page*

"into all the world" with the gospel, then one will draw into the fellowship people that some members will object to, like divorced people, alcoholics, homeless, different races, homosexuals, fundamentalists and even some intellectuals. It's a mistake to refuse to subsidize the St. Paul Fellowship because it has accepted gays and lesbians. *Dellis Schrock, Fargo, N.D.*

INSURANCE IS NOT CHRISTLIKE

I have long wondered if the column "Fiscal Health" belongs in *The Mennonite.* I doubt that Christ had insurance as part of his message. The article in the March 14 issue was particularly disturbing.

The Mennonite faith that I learned included a responsibility for each other. I did not learn that Christ's message was to lay up treasures so that my family can live "happily ever after" when I pass away.

I believe Christ's message was to give *all* that I have. I do not recall a biblical reference to buy life insurance first. To say that leaving one's children or spouse with no means of support is a "cruel and irresponsible act" is a marketing ploy appealing to our emotions.

Insurance companies take care of themselves first. They must have a reserve fund to get an insurance license. That reserve money is never to be spent, only added to. Christ had no reserve fund nor intended any of us to. If all the insurance companies in the United States added up these reserve funds, there would be enough wealth to feed and clothe the hungry, which *is* one of Christ's messages.

Rate-ups are an outright rip-off for someone born with a health problem. I do not remember reading that Christ "rated" anyone when it came to physical characteristics or infirmities. And what about those people involved in war (i.e. Bosnia or Rwanda) whose insurance papers (if they had any) mean absolutely nothing now?

I would like to see "Fiscal Health" removed from *The Mennonite* or make it what it is: an advertisement page. And J.B. Miller should not try to intimidate anyone into feeling guilty for not buying a secular product like insurance.

When we lay up treasures for our families, we lose a foundation of our faith. *Mark A. Krehbiel, Salina, Kan.*

A way home

Sara Wenger Shenk is author of Coming Home *(Good Books, 1992) and lives in Harrisonburg, Va.*

Parents are the primary teachers

Why parents should meet together about parenting

Sara Wenger Shenk

I am in a doctoral seminar on curriculum theory and practice. Curriculum theory has never gripped my imagination or quickened my pulse. But the seminar is pushing me to do the foundational work that must be done if our educational work at church, school and home are to have any underlying coherence and purpose.

Why do we teach what we teach? Whether we are intentional about our teaching or not, our children will learn morning, noon and night from what we say and do. How might our life change if we reflected on what and how we want to teach our children?

Few churches have actively sought to equip parents with the skills of parenting.

I'm not suggesting that we bring the school into our homes. Conversation about curriculum planning often conjures up images of detail work, lesson plans, objectives and evaluation tools. But I am curious about what we might observe if we cultivated an educational consciousness at home. What might we discover about ourselves if we consciously thought about our life together and reflected on what we are teaching our children by the way we live?

Take the house we live in, for example, or the neighborhood we've chosen. What about our jobs or our use of time? What do we do around the table in the morning and in the evening? What books do we read aloud or buy for our children? How do we pray and teach our children to pray? How do we use money? How do we discipline? Where do we go to school and church?

Among the most urgent tasks for the church today is to *empower parents to teach their children* what it means to follow Christ. Parents are on the front line of shaping character in the lives of their children, yet they receive minimal support from the church. At a gathering of some 40 Methodist pastors not long ago, I asked how many have support groups for parents in their congregations. Only one or two raised their hands. There are a variety of ways churches support parents, with day care and youth programs, for example, but few, in my experience, have actively sought to equip parents with the skills of parenting.

Support groups for parents: The church can help parents cultivate an educational consciousness at home. It can also help parents to shape home life to reflect more adequately their commitments to follow Christ. In Sunday school classes and support groups for parents we can reflect together on what we teach by the way we live and how we can do better.

There are many reasons for parents to meet together. Here are a few:

1. To talk about our vision for family life and what ought to characterize our life at home;

2. To share our struggles and failures with other struggling parents in a setting where confidentiality and sensitive listening are encouraged;

3. To hold each other accountable to be loving, respectful and faithful in our primary relationships;

4. To learn new skills for more satisfying parenting;

5. To inspire each other with ideas for teaching our children to follow Christ.

The family with the strange habit

Members of this family share what they have to meet the needs of others.

Eddy Hall

It all began many hundreds of years ago in a city many miles from here. This family—the one with the strange habit—was not just a mom and a dad and a few kids. They had relatives of all ages and shapes and sizes living all over town. And, like other families then, most were poor and only a few well off.

Though being poor was common, this family had a most uncommon way of dealing with it. It made their neighbors take notice: "They're nice enough folks, I'll grant you, but a little different, don't you think?"

For in this family, you see, when someone needed food or clothes or money, someone else shared. Now that may not sound so strange, but this family took it to extremes. Those who owned houses even sold them and shared that money.

"Why do you share all your money?" neighbors often asked.

"Oh, it's not my money," they would say. "It's the family's."

Now, that was strange.

"That family really knows how to love each other," people would say. Then some would add, "But I'm glad I'm not in it" (for, you see, they were not too big on sharing everything).

Aside from being strange, though, did the plan work? Yes, indeed! Never did a family member have a financial need that went unmet—all because the family shared.

Well, the family grew, as families do, and many moved to other towns, even to other countries. There children were born and grew up, children who had never seen the hometown or met the family members who lived there.

Then the family plan faced its greatest test in many years. Famine invaded the home country. Persecution broke out. The few family members there who had extra shared until they had no more to share.

It was one thing to share and share alike when most of the family lived close together and knew each other, but would the plan work now?

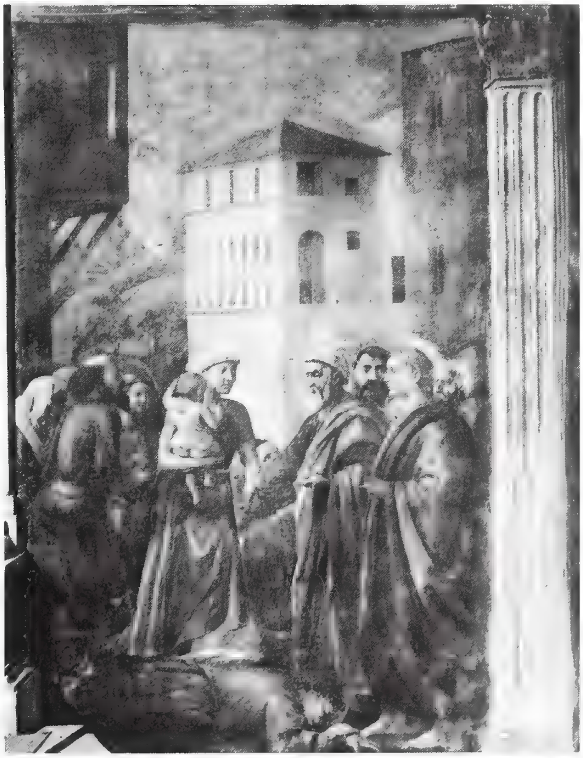
A respected family leader carried the appeal for help from town to town. He presented the plan to those who had never heard, and reminded those who had, "Those who have more than enough [must] share with those who have less than enough, so that no one has too much or too little."

Do we dare to so live and so share that we will become known as the family with the strange habit?

And share they did. Just as they had before. The family's love triumphed again.

Now, generations later, this family is scattered throughout the world. Has their strange habit survived?

Just barely. As at the beginning, most of them are poor. Some, especially those in richer nations, have more than enough. Yet most of these have never heard of the family's time-honored plan. They spend freely on themselves but share little with their needy relatives.



Art Reference Bureau, Inc.

Strange habit: *"St. Peter and St. John Distributing the Goods of the Community to the Faithful and the Death of Ananias" by Masaccio*

A few, though, have kept the plan alive. And from time to time a few more rediscover the plan and begin learning to live with less so they can share more generously with their sisters and brothers.

When this happens, God is pleased, because, you see, the family with the strange habit is the family of God.

Yes, it was members of God's family 2,000 years ago who "were one in heart and mind," among whom no one claimed that any of their possessions were their own, "but they shared everything they had," and as a result "there were no needy persons among them." It was in God's family that "from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales, and it was distributed" to those who had need (Acts 4:32, 34-35 NIV).

Years later, as Paul visited the churches, gathering the offering for the believers in Jerusalem, he taught this powerful principle: "At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality" (2 Corinthians 8:14 NIV).

What about today? Can God's family sharing plan still work? Can it work so well that once again there will be no unmet need in the family? Yes, of course it can.

It can happen, but will it? Will God's family once again begin practicing this "strange habit" that so unifies the family and demonstrates its love to the world?

The answer to that, of course, depends on us. Do we dare to so live and so share that once again we will deserve the honor of being known as the family with the strange habit?

Eddy Hall is a free-lance writer in Goessel, Kan.

Fiscal health

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

How much is enough?

Some guidelines for difficult questions

J.B. Miller

As a Christian living in a world that has many needs, I struggle often with the question, Am I accumulating too much for that rainy day or for retirement?

The talk about savings never seems to end. In our early adult years, it's saving for our first home. Later it might be to put the kids through college, and still later it's saving for retirement. Even then it doesn't end. In retirement we are concerned about having enough to live on and take care of our future needs, so we continue to save. The perceived need to save is very much a part of us. But we need to stop and ask, How much do I really need? How much accumulation is too much? As Christians we must ask these questions and a similar one: Am I being responsible with the resources I have?

While some suggest it is wrong to accumulate resources, that approach needs to be seen for what it is: impractical, unworkable and irresponsible. The Bible seems clear in its teaching that we need to assume responsibility for our family members, clothing and feeding them. In today's society, that includes planning for their education, enabling them to flee the nest and planning for our own retirement.

But what happens between the time we start earning money and the time we settle into retirement? These are the times some of us struggle with whether we are being generous givers. Are we so caught up in accumulation that we forget about being generous with our resources? How do we know when we've accumulated enough? These are difficult questions for which there are no answers, not even some easy ones. There are, however, some guidelines that can help.

Give generously and systematically. Decide early that you are going to give a fixed percentage of your income to your church. Make giving an active part of your worship. Give from the first, not from what is left over after all the bills are paid. Increase the percentage of giving as your income increases.

Balance your giving with saving. Save systematically and try to make it easy to save. If your employer has some kind of payroll savings plan, take advantage of it.

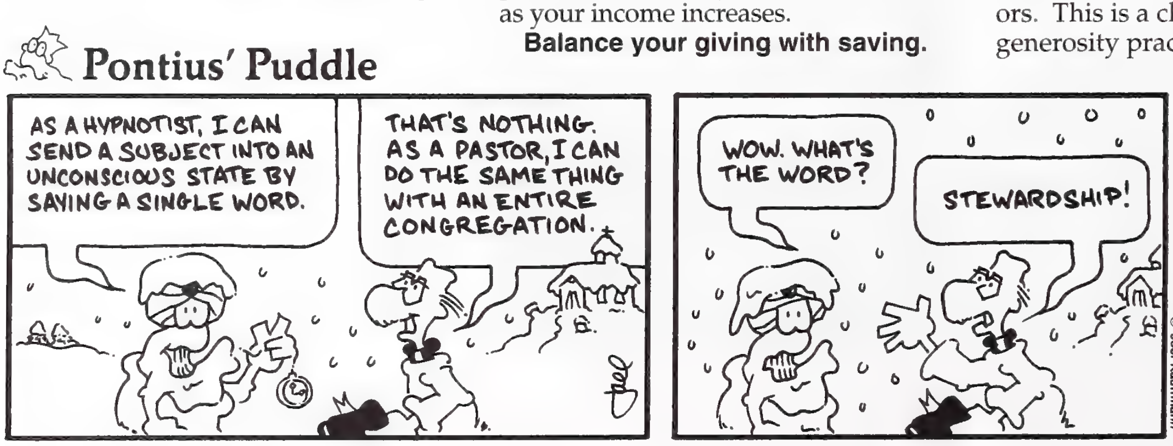
Periodically make a self-assessment of your accumulation practices. Are you caught up in the belief that you will be happier if you can only accumulate more things?

Constantly ask these questions: Am I being generous with my financial and other resources? Do I imitate Christ in giving sacrificially? Do I share from the abundance that God has entrusted to me? As members of the community of faith, we have an advantage over other savers. We can check from time to time with our small group or other people in our congregation to see if we have become so caught up in accumulation that we have lost our spirit of generosity.

Consider planning to give it all away at the time of your death. Since being generous with our resources is foundational to what we do as Christians, the final guideline addresses what we do with all we've accumulated at the point of our death. At that point we have no need to think about a down payment, a college education or retirement. How we direct the disposition of our assets at the point of death says a lot about how generous we really were in life. The issues are different depending on age. A young parent must provide for the care of dependents who survive. But an older person may not need to be so concerned about survivors. This is a chance to extend acts of generosity practiced throughout life.

Some suggest it is wrong to accumulate resources, but that approach needs to be seen for what it is: impractical, unworkable and irresponsible.

Giving it all away and not trying to take it along can be a wonderful final act of generosity. Sharing ourselves and our resources with the needy adds to our riches. If we don't share with those in need, our accumulation is meaningless.


Pontius' Puddle
AS A HYPNOTIST, I CAN SEND A SUBJECT INTO AN UNCONSCIOUS STATE BY SAYING A SINGLE WORD.
THAT'S NOTHING. AS A PASTOR, I CAN DO THE SAME THING WITH AN ENTIRE CONGREGATION.
joel
WOW. WHAT'S THE WORD?
STEWARDSHIP!
© Joel Kauffmann

- A Mennonite Central Committee publication
- May 1995
- vol 18
- no 2

contact

cation
MCC contact
Joy in unexpected places
Mennonite Central Committee
mcc contact

past present future

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A look at the way we will be, pages 7, 8

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Country profile: Haiti, page 10

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The front cover design combines three MCC Contact newsletters over a 15-year period symbolizing past, present and future.

Writing the vision

From circle letters to cyberspace

"Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets. . . " (Habakkuk 2:2).

How can we best communicate MCC's vision, making it plain? And what tablets should we use? MCC Communications staff have struggled with these questions for years.

Prior to 1977 MCC staff produced the Women's Activity Letter, primarily to inform women's sewing circles how many and where quilts, and other material resources, were needed. MCC Contact replaced this newsletter in 1977; its expanded content included features about MCC volunteers' lives and issues of war, poverty and hunger.

Now, in mid-1995, when younger constituents are likely to spend more time at computer terminals than at quilting frames, MCC continues to look for new ways to communicate its service vision. In a recent MCC-commissioned survey, constituents under age 35 said they would like to receive MCC communications through computer networking/on-line access. MCC is inching onto the information highway by putting some press releases on the Internet.

Additionally, young respondents indicated interest in receiving an MCC publication in their home. As a result, MCC Contact, MCC's main newsletter, is being discontinued and MCC will launch a magazine this fall. The magazine, not yet named, will share the perspectives of MCC partners and workers and interpretation of world events. It will also include some features currently in MCC Contact, such as listings of material resource and giving projects. Debbie Fast of Kitchener, Ont., who previously served with MCC in Kenya, will edit the magazine.

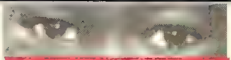
The first issue of the new magazine will be inserted in Mennonite periodicals and will explain how readers can be put on the mailing list.

To mark this time of transition, writers of articles in this final issue of MCC Contact look at the past and the present, and attempt to peer into the future.

••• **Pearl Sensenig**
MCC Communications

A look at the way we were

A look at the way we are



A look at the way we were

MCC Contact was first published in November 1977, replacing the Women's Activity Letter. In the early years, MCC Contact was a four-page newsletter, produced monthly except for a combined July-August issue. MCC Contact focused on MCC volunteers' lives and their interactions with new friends and cultures. Initially, the readers were mostly women.

mcc—contact
november 1977
vol 1 no 1

Hot and lonely in Upper Volta

Under this heading, the first MCC Contact featured the daily lives of three women volunteers in Upper Volta, now called Burkina Faso. The women, who lived along the southern edge of the Sahara Desert, coped with bugs in their flour and blistering heat. The women often dragged their beds out on the veranda when the temperature soared, but "although it offers the most comfortable night's sleep, this practice requires one to be up early or become a neighborhood attraction," observed Sarah Eby of the MCC Information Services staff. Due to their isolated locations, "the ability to be at ease when alone" was essential, noted Eby.

Afternoon in a Longhouse
mcc—contact
december 1978
vol 2 no 11

Afternoon in an Indonesian longhouse

In the December 1978 MCC Contact, MCC Indonesia volunteer Dorothy Beidler wrote about tea time with Mama Rini, a woman she met while living in a longhouse, or communal dwelling. Mama Rini, one of the few literate village women, delighted in sounding out words in her prized hymnal. "Although in her mid-20s, hard work and illnesses had left her thin and hollow-cheeked. The thick callouses on her feet represent miles of walking, padding silently along the well-packed mud paths, squishing her way through swamps as well as crossing fields and jungle areas on tree-logs," related Beidler.

"How much I need to grow in the trust, patience and acceptance that describe Mama Rini," concluded Beidler.

In the December 1979 MCC Contact, the editor introduced yet another phase for MCC Contact, now MCC's major publication. MCC Contact was to be typeset and published six times yearly. "Although many of the items may be of primary interest to women, it is hoped that the entire family will enjoy and benefit from this expanded paper," wrote editor Amy Rinner.

the year of the child
mcc—contact
december 1979
vol 3 no 11

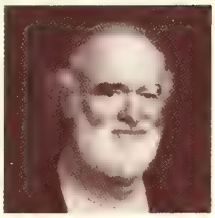
Pineapples, free shoes, costly bullets

A sampling of MCC Contact in the 1980s and 1990s:

- **"Should Filipino land not be used to grow food for Filipinos—60 percent of whom suffer from malnutrition—rather than produce luxury crops to export to First World countries," questioned MCCers and their Filipino friends in the December 1984 issue of MCC Contact. The Philippine subsidiary of the American-owned Del Monte corporation had acquired land from small farmers, sometimes through intimidation, for their pineapple plantations. Farmers could no longer grow food for their families, laboring instead for meager wages.**
- **"Material resources: When helping hurts," the lead article in the April 1989 MCC Contact, featured a fictitious story about a North American who rescued surplus shoes from a factory dump and shared them with needy people overseas. The arrival of free shoes drove the local shoemaker out of business. This introduction to the complexities of material resource distribution helped explain MCC's policy of sharing resources that are "culturally appropriate and that do not significantly disrupt the local economy," in consultation with local partners.**

- **What is the "cost of war"? pondered the writers of the November 1991 MCC Contact. "Much of our service today occurs as a result of war, including a great deal of our food assistance ... ," noted John Longhurst, MCC Canada Communications. "If we want to feed hungry people, we should try to find ways to end the wars that disrupt their lives and economies."**

A look at the way we are



This amazing peoplehood

Earl Martin, MCC storyteller, has visited some 100 churches, schools and community groups across North America during the past year. He reports on his experiences with MCC constituents:

It was a free morning, so I joined builder Jim Shaum on a roof reshingling job. The shingles were stiff in the morning coolness. Jim showed me how to use a shingling hammer to make the correct alignments. We talked as we worked. Bluebirds darted playfully about a spruce tree nearby.

Jim is a kind, thoughtful man who has walked gently on the earth and close to his God for more than six decades. After several hours of gleaning some of his life learnings, I asked him directly, "Jim, if you were asked to give counsel to Mennonite agencies, what would you say?"

His hammer fell silent. All I heard was the chattering of the bluebirds. Finally, Jim said, "I'd just say, try to do things as near as possible to the way Jesus would do them."

Over the last year I been moved by the humble, inspiring wisdom of folks like Jim Shaum. Seeing the church in action across the continent heartens me. Oh, I suppose there's plenty to be concerned about as well, but primarily my impressions are hopeful:

Faith and piety are alive and well.

The graces around the table. Teen-agers of hosts going off to Mennonite Youth Fellowship meetings. The posters and mottoes on the walls. The church I encounter on the road, for all its flaws, seems deeply connected to a loving, present God. While the ordinariness of routine jobs remains the reality for many, beneath it all I sense a simple but profound awareness that we walk in the presence of the Spirit.

A sense of peoplehood is strong.

For better and for worse, we are part of a family. As a family we are marked by scraps and various dilemmas. But at least we know we're a part of something bigger than ourselves, and yet small enough that we have a place.

Hence, I sense a strong ownership—at least among adults—in our church agencies, be they colleges, mission boards or service agencies. As a visitor sent from MCC, for example, I often sense people feel that "MCC 'R Us."

I've caught the spirit both of Kansas farmers meeting to do MCC meat canning, and professionals in British Columbia giving witness against a military air show in their town.

People delight in direct service.

Many persons and churches contribute regularly to mission and service beyond their home communities. I visited one congregation where on the previous Sunday the 105 persons attending had offered $14,000 for missions and service. I'm always awed at generosity.

Beyond such financial donations, however, I observe that folks want to be involved in action, in direct response. I think of the circle of women at Martin's Mennonite Church in Orrville, Ohio.

After sharing our stories together, they invited me to join them around the quilt being made for an MCC relief sale. At some unexpressed level we knew that each stitch represented a bond to unmet friends in a faraway land. And the women were gracious enough not to rip out my uneven stitches—at least not in my presence!

I encountered many people who volunteered many hours in MCC stores, Mennonite Disaster Service or other community service. When I queried Leono Dyck of Lethbridge, Alberta, why she and her husband did so much volunteer work, she responded out of simple joy: "Why wouldn't we serve if we're healthy. It's so interesting out there," she said simply.

Serve all in need, but the need always includes the spiritual.

Share food with Buddhists, communists, Muslims around the world? Of course. Nowhere did I encounter resistance to helping anyone in need, regardless of their life traditions. But just as clearly comes a reminder: Remember, our call is not just sharing the cup of cold water or drilling wells together with farmers in Cambodia. Our deeper call is to share the good news of the One who is called the Living Water.

Jim Shaum, with shingling hammer by his side, expressed no desire to second-guess or to control the actions of Mennonite mission and service agencies. In fact, I sensed from him and the myriad Mennonites and Brethren in Christ I've encountered a deep sense of respect and trust. Our people, deeply committed to practical service, also emphasize that we do not live by bread alone. The tangible elements of bread or water or shingling hammers are but symbols of the deeper communion of God's Spirit to which all are invited.

••• **Earl Martin**
MCC Communications

A look at the way we will be

A look at the way we will be

Meeting human need—together

MCC's current, growing multi-cultural constituency (African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians) has similarities to the constituency that joined together to form MCC 75 years ago. Although not wealthy, the earlier constituency, consisting of people with Russian, German and Swiss backgrounds, had commitment, energy, passion and a desire to assist their brothers and sisters in war-ravaged Russia.

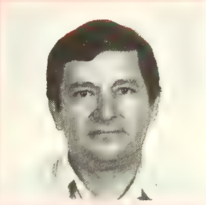
MCC's multi-cultural constituency has brothers, sisters, sons and daughters who are suffering from racism, joblessness, lack of educational opportunities, crime and imprisonment. This constituency has the personal experience, the passion and the vision to engage in meeting these needs.

MCC's traditional constituency has become increasingly affluent but remains compassionate and caring. It still generates vast resources to meet human need worldwide. But it does not have many natural connections to the diverse, marginalized constituency.

The challenge for MCC U.S. in the next decade is to confront institutional and structural racism so that its traditional and multi-cultural constituencies can work together to meet human need.

••• **Lynette Meck**
MCC U.S. executive secretary

Global vision for the Anabaptist family



The number one future challenge for MCC will be to give profound focus to God's plan, according to Isaiah 65: 17-25. Each act of service in the fields of agriculture, health, education, technology, environment, etc., would be like small signs of "the new order" or "the Kingdom of God." The biblical basis for an Anabaptist theology of service must be reinforced.

Another challenge for MCC will be to promote connections between Mennonites around the world—churches, schools, farmers, women, professionals, artists, etc.—to facilitate human warmth. I hope that MCC, with its history of service, will be an instrument to promote global vision within the Anabaptist family.

••• **Ovidio Flores**
Latin American Mennonite layleader

Service: Mysterious transformation

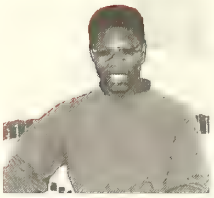
MCC is not a static institution that needs to be preserved at all costs. Rather, it is a people-centered, dynamic view of life and service that is firmly rooted in a non-violent faith tradition and a history of suffering.

This view of life was transmitted to Mennonite children of my generation by MCC representatives who visited our churches to report on relief and service involvements in faraway lands. They were able to stir our hearts to respond to a challenge beyond ourselves. As a result, thousands of us spent many years volunteering our time and talents, both at home and abroad. Somewhat to our surprise, we returned home telling stories—stories about experiences that led to personal transformation; stories of exceptional love, richness and celebration in the midst of poverty and suffering, stories of getting far more than we gave. . .

This mysterious transformation through service is the essence of my vision for the future direction of MCC. My deepest hope is that MCC will continue to provide similar opportunities for many more generations of Mennonite children.

••• **Leona Dueck Penner**
MCC South Africa country co-representative

Mission equals evangelism plus social action



Like other agencies, MCC will have to redefine its vision as it seeks to involve youth. In an instantaneous society, staying relevant is crucial if the younger generation is to be excited by missions. Agencies once depended on videos, letters and speakers to share their message; today the emphasis has shifted from hearing about to experiencing service. The "buster" generation does not have a year or more to commit to service, but a short-term opportunity will help develop the concept of a long-term commitment.

As an African living in Canada, I have observed that North American churches tend to emphasize either evangelism or social action. But emphasizing just one or the other does not help further the great commission. God's kingdom is about transforming both lives and communities. My prayer is that through MCC we shall see a single avenue that encompasses both evangelism and social action.

••• **Imbenzi George**
MCC board member, church youth worker

Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster, Pa.

Call us "Generation Why"

I like the way MCC works with people, offering assistance with no strings attached, emphasizing holistic services, not just evangelism. That gives MCC credibility among people my age. We are also impressed by the respect the non-Christian world has for MCC.

One negative aspect for my age group, however, is that the MCC board, at least in Canada, still looks much like an "old boys' club." As a new board member, I'm aware that I fill a demographic and gender need for MCC. But I hope it's not a token position. As well, people in my age group aren't excited about hierarchical approaches to leadership. At the volunteer level, MCC seems to be collaborative. But at the leadership levels, it still seems "top down."

If MCC is going to reach my generation, it cannot patronize us. Not all of us spend our time worrying that we don't have the right clothes or shoes. Don't assume we don't care about the world. We've been called "Generation X," but I think a better name is "Generation Why." "Generation X" suggests we have no substance or direction.

But many of us are asking questions about life and are interested in issues of peace, conflict resolution and practical service. We want to be challenged.

••• **Lori Unger**
MCC Canada board member,
college student

Feed the hungry

When my son was in Africa, they had to close a school because the students didn't have enough to eat. I see that we need to feed the hungry, even though there are so many.

I try to make a quilt for the MCC relief sale every year; one year I made two. I started quilting in 1934 for my hope chest, hoping I'd need it sometime. After my husband passed away in 1983 I really got down to business and quilted.

"Leave the quilts alone," some people tell me. But I can't. That's my mission if it means I can raise money to help out.

••• **Wilma Graber**
Volunteer quilter,
MCC Central States workroom

What matters: Whether the villages get the wells

I'm just a simple plowboy from northern Saskatchewan so I don't always see the complexity of situations. But my hunch is that the best path from a need to a solution is a line with as few stopping points as possible.

Simply put, if what we do doesn't feed the hungry, doesn't give dignity to the powerless or doesn't give hope to the despairing, it doesn't matter how neatly drawn our structural and flow charts are. When we get more occupied with ideological concerns or where the money comes from, well, the people I worked with in Egypt didn't give a tinker's whistle about whether funding for an irrigation project came from Canada or the United States (actually it came from Holland), or how many board members were needed to authorize it. The line ran from congregations to the wells.

Our vision as a church and its institutions—as MCC for its next 75 years—is to keep that line, and the size of the junctures on it, to an absolute minimum. The confidence of the constituency lies not in the elaborate nature of information, the illusion of involvement or the meaning of representation (no board member can be expected to be very knowledgeable about a $50 million Cdn.-plus program) but in whether villages get wells.

Short lines. That's what we simple peasant stock understand.

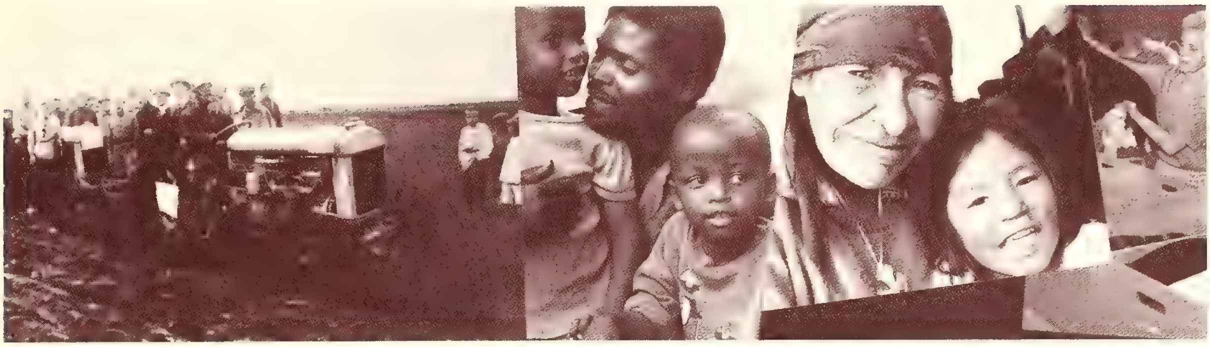
••• **Vern Ratzlaff**
pastor,
former MCC worker

MCC U.S. Summer Service, Philadelphia, Pa.

Mennonite Central Committee's 75th anniversary mark recalls the source of our motivation in the past and our focus for the future.

The cross opening out suggests a passion and power giving birth to love and action out of proportion to human ability.

1920–1995
75 Years Service in the Name of Christ



MCC 75th anniversary resources

* * *

Through new eyes, a 23-minute video, shows how 75 years of service have shaped MCC, MCC volunteers and MCC's supporting churches. It focuses on five dramatic chapters in MCC's history: the 1920s, World War II, Teachers Abroad Program in Africa; work in Vietnam and work in Central America. It includes a study guide. Available for free loan from any MCC office, or to purchase a copy, send $25 Cdn./$20 U.S. to the MCC Akron office.

* * *

Anniversary photo essay, a 24-page booklet, contains a photographic time line of MCC's history and several short articles. Available free from any MCC office.

* * *

Celebrate, reflect, recommit, an MCC Sunday resource packet, contains a litany, a children's story and sermon suggestions. MCC is inviting its supporting churches to set aside September 24 as "MCC Sunday," to celebrate MCC's 75th anniversary. For more information, contact your nearest MCC office.

* * *

MCC anniversary speakers bureau includes 44 speakers who are available to tell MCC stories in church services and at special events in 1995. Contact your nearest MCC office.

News from MCC

* * *

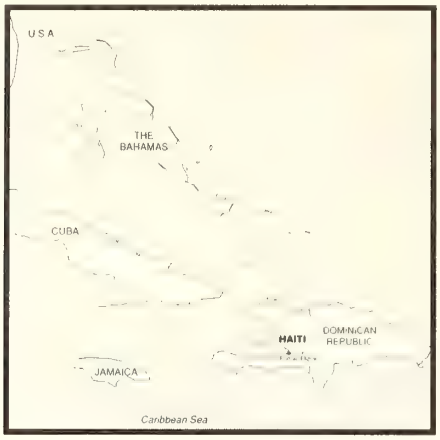
MCC contributed $47,000 Cdn./$35,000 U.S. to assist people left homeless by the Chechnya conflict. Additionally, MCC shipped medical supplies sufficient to care for 90,000 refugees for a month and two 40-foot containers of soap, school kits and other material resources. In late January MCC workers helped distribute MCC canned beef and other supplies to refugees northwest of Moscow. "Last week these people wept tears of bitterness. They were isolated, forgotten, no one cared. This week they weep because they feel your compassion," the MCCers were told.

* * *

They didn't know it at the time, but the two young men who vandalized 22 properties in Elmira, Ont., in 1974 started a revolution in the way courts around the world deal with offenders. The two youths were the first participants in a court-ordered program that is today known as the Victim Offender Reconciliation Project (VORP). Started by MCC Ontario in 1975, VORP programs can now be found in 200 communities in North America, as well as in Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. VORP holds "offenders accountable for their crimes," but also seeks ways to "restore them to the community," explains Wayne Northey, MCC Canada's VORP director.

MCC Contact (ISSN 1060-3492) is published in February, May, August and November by Mennonite Central Committee, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. Editors are Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker, Pearl Sensenig and John Longhurst. Design by Ronald Tinsley. Copies are sent in bulk to church addresses upon request. Address correspondence to **MCC Contact** Editor, 21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. In Canada, address correspondence to **MCC Contact** Editor, MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Dr., Winnipeg, MB, R3T 5K9. Second class postage paid at Akron, Pa., and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. Printed in U.S.A.

Photo credits: page 2, Dave Klassen; page 3, Lowell Detweiler, Linda Shelly, Lorin Beidler; page 6, Pearl Sensenig, John Leckie, Howard Zehr, Mark Beach, Emily Will, Ruth Brenneman, Alonna Gautsche Sprunger, Jodibeth McCain; page 7, Howard Zehr; page 8, Howard Zehr; page 9, Dave Klassen, G. Bruce Hildebrand, Lorin Beidler; pages 10,11, Howard Zehr; page 12, Jon Warren, Howard Zehr.



MCC country profile

Haiti

Haiti Population: 7 million
MCC present since: 1958
Number of North American MCC staff: 13
Number of Haitian staff: 35
1994 program expenses: $341,151 U.S./$464,151 Cdn.
1994 material resources: $177,467 U.S./$241,452 Cdn.

How will Haiti emerge from its latest three-year plunge into a political whirlpool? The question remains unanswered as the island-nation prepares to assume greater responsibility for maintaining and improving security after the departure of foreign troops. The troops' presence permitted reinstatement of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in late 1994.

The Haitian military ousted Aristide, Haiti's democratically elected president, in September 1991 and unleashed terror and repression on Haitians.

Haiti, the Western Hemisphere's poorest country, was further impoverished by international sanctions intended to force military rulers to yield power but which instead created unspeakable hardship for the poor.

Mass deforestation worsened, as hungry peasants cut even prized mango trees to sell to charcoal-makers. The situation prompted one MCC worker to question God as the prophet Habakkuk did: "Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong?" (Habakkuk 1:3).

To address growing hunger in the Bwadlorens area, MCC in 1994 distributed seed to 1,000 families, a quarter of the area's population.

MCC agriculturists taught soil conservation methods and supported local tree nurseries. MCC health workers provided health lessons, with emphasis on safe birthing techniques. One health worker facilitated the training of 60 traditional health attendants.

MCC Haiti is exploring new work in mediation and reconciliation, believing this is a key need for Haiti over the next few years, and is also developing relationships in poor neighborhoods in Port au Prince.

Is God calling you to fill one of these urgent personnel openings?

Haiti: country representative, two agriculturists, community development worker, job creation coordinator and two health workers.

•••

Cambodia: country representative

•••

Washington, D.C.: program coordinator

•••

Labrador: adult basic education/computer literacy

•••

Saskatchewan: social worker

•••

British Columbia: social worker, mental health worker

•••

Florida: nurse

•••

Nigeria: medical doctor

•••

Bangladesh: soybean research agronomist

•••

Akron, Pa.: secretary, canner operator

African-American and Latino Anabaptist team leaders and participants are needed for "Our stories, our lives: A drama team exploring racism." The team will tour North America in summer 1996.

If you are or someone you know is interested in any of these positions, contact MCC Personnel Services, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151. In Canada, contact MCC Personnel Services, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381.

Selling charcoal in Haiti

Nap time at Center of Hope, a home for Rwandan orphans and children separated from their parents, eastern Zaire.

Indian school children

Giving projects

•••

(July) Camp for Palestinian refugee children: MCC helps fund summer activities that educate and stimulate. $6.95 Cdn./$5 U.S. enables a student to visit historic sites, such as the Dead Sea, Jericho, Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee. $278 Cdn./$200 U.S. pays for a bus and fees for 40 children.

•••

(August) Education for Indian street children: MCC supports a school in Calcutta where 150 street children learn to read, play and feel loved. $15.95 Cdn./$11.50 U.S. helps educate a child for 1 year. $3,735 Cdn./$2,688 U.S. is the total budget.

•••

(September) Halting erosion in Haiti: MCC teaches Haitian farmers to construct living barriers of trees and grasses to prevent topsoil from washing off hillside fields. $20.80 Cdn./$15 U.S. pays for a farmer to take agriculture extension lessons. $208 Cdn./$150 U.S. covers one group's lessons.

Material resources projects

•••

(July) Towels: Good quality, dark colored bath and hand towels are needed for schools and health clinics. The versatility of towels make them a frequently requested item!

•••

(August) School kits: Include a school kit for a needy child on your back-to-school shopping list. This year MCC shipped 3,700 school kits to Nicaragua, 3,600 to Russia and 13,000 to Iraq. Workers in Iraq reported "delight on the children's faces" and "squeals of pleasure" as Iraqi children received the MCC school kits. Call any MCC office for a list of school kit contents.

•••

(September) Blankets: Single/twin size blankets for hospitals, refugee camps and orphanages. MCC also keeps blankets on hand for emergencies such as the Rwandan refugee crisis last year when MCC was able to quickly supply 28,000 blankets.

Mennonite
Central
Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
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MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9

Please include the following information with all contributions for Contact giving projects:

Name of project: __________

Your name: __________

Address: __________

Conference or church affiliation: __________

Project no. __________

News

MC board sends integration proposal to Wichita

Goshen, Ind. (*Gospel Herald*)—A recommendation that the Mennonite Church (MC) merge with the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) cleared its final checkpoint April 20-22.

Sixteen members of the 24-member MC General Board voted to send the recommendation to delegates at Wichita '95 for a final decision. Eight voted against sending on the recommendation.

> **"You [MCs] may have a little homework to do in making us GCs feel welcomed."**
>
> ***Darrell Fast***

Responding to the vote, GC moderator Darrell Fast said, "You [MCs] may have a little homework to do in making us GCs feel welcomed. We don't just want to be accepted. We want to be embraced." The GC General Board in March had not only passed the integration recommendation but also urged GC delegates to vote yes in July.

MC General Board members tried to decide what the eight no votes meant. Some seemed to intend their vote as saying no to integration. Others seemed to intend their vote as saying no to putting the recommendation to integrate before delegates.

"Our vote moves us forward because three-fourths of us agreed to send the recommendation to General Assembly," said MC moderator Donella Clemens. "However, Darrell Fast's response also tells us how a no vote feels from the other side."

The MC board also grappled with how large a majority of votes should be required for integration to pass.

They heard that the General Assembly constitution calls for a simple majority (more than 50 percent) for a motion to pass. Because of integration's implications for the future of the church, however, the board agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that a two-third's majority be needed on the merger vote at Wichita. *J. Lorne Peachey*

Chinese pastor takes new message home

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—When pastor He Hong returns to the pulpit this summer, she expects some people will be surprised by what she has to say.

Hong took a two-year absence from the Dong Guan Church, Shenyang, China, to study at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. She will return to China at the end of May. She plans to speak about God's unconditional love in her first sermon: "I want them to know that God wants to help us. God still loves us even when bad things happen in our lives."

That kind of message is different from the sermons Chinese believers often hear. "Many preachers tell them that they don't have enough faith if there are problems in their lives," she said. Hong served as a pastoral intern at the Dong Guan Church from 1986 to

Dean Linsenmeyer

New message: *He Hong*

Inside the news

Honduras ends conscription / p. 15

Militia and Mennonites: A commentary / p. 16

A three-in-one miracle birth in Haiti / p. 17

Conflict between Christians and Muslims escalates in Nigeria / p. 18

After serving 28 months in a Dutch prison for being a Nazi collaborator in World War II, Jacob Luitjens is homeless. Luitjens' family still lives in Vancouver, where Luitjens was an active member and deacon at First United Mennonite Church until he was deported from Canada in 1992. Hans Isaak, pastor of the church, feels Canada is violating a basic human rights issue. When a person has served his time in prison, he says, "then the concern of society and the community is to bring the person back into society again. In this case, it's the opposite. They're giving the message that he's not wanted." The church has worked with Mennonite Central Committee to petition the government for Luitjen's return, but with no success. (*Christian Week*)

• • •

In Kenya AIDS is spreading more rapidly among Christians than members of other faiths, reports *Christian Century*. Joseph Mania Mungai, a medical doctor and former vice chancellor of Nairobi University, addressed the problem at the 16th African Science Congress in February in Nairobi. He said that AIDS infection in Kenya is higher among Christians than among followers of Islam, Judaism and Buddhism because the Christian churches have obscured the issue of sexuality. He said the Christian church has helped destroy traditional cultural practices in Kenya, including educating young people about courtship. He said removing that education without providing an alternative wreaked havoc on the socialization process. (*Gospel Herald*)

Mennonite Brethren poet Jean Janzen has received a $20,000 award from the National Endowment for the Arts. The award is one of 37 national poetry grants given annually. Janzen plans to use the grant to travel and live in the Netherlands. "I have an interest in Dutch Mennonite history and I want to research that a bit, but mostly I want to be free to write," she said.

• • •

Cassel Mennonite Church, Tavistock, Ont., held a dual celebration May 7. The church's 60th anniversary was celebrated at the morning service. The church also held an afternoon dedication service for a new addition and newly renovated basement and auditorium. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

Church leadership has helped confine women to a peripheral role in the church, said Kenyan Mary Ochillo at an all-Africa Mennonite gathering in Nairobi last fall. Although the majority of church members in Africa are women, they have little involvement in decision making, she said. She suggested areas to work on, including encouraging women to attain formal education, exposing them to theological training, training women in leadership roles in the family and community and empowering them through economic self-reliance. (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

A truckload of donated supplies from central Kansas made it to El Salvador after being detained by Salvadoran customs officials March 31-April 20. Officials initially asked for taxes and duties totaling as much as $10,000. The officials finally allowed the truck to continue on to Las Americas, a sister community to Newton, Kan. The Newton Area Peace Center and three other Kansas groups—at Wichita, Lawrence and Manhattan—had worked for over a year on the project, in cooperation with three Salvadoran sister cities: Las Americas, La Bermuda and El Papaturro.

Shenyang
Beijing★
CHINA

1991 and then as a pastor until July 1993.

China Educational Exchange, which is supported by Mennonites, sponsored her stay in the United States. The Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church and Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church also contributed.

While Hong has been studying in the United States, the number of believers attending the Dong Guan Church has continued to grow. "Many of them come from far away. They are eager to learn more about the Bible. Sometimes there is not enough room for them inside the church building," she said. The congregation recently added a fourth worship service and has plans to construct a three-story building.

Mature faith: When she returns to China, Hong wants to help the members develop a more mature faith. She noted that it has only been since the late 1970s that Christians have again been allowed to gather for worship. During the Cultural Revolution, from 1966 to 1976, the Chinese government closed all the churches, and Christians were persecuted for their beliefs.

The suppression of the church resulted in a lack of leaders, said Hong. At the approximately 5,000-member Dong Guan Church, for example, there are five pastors, three over 70 years old. Only 200 believers attended the congregation when it first reopened in 1979. The pastors at the Dong Guan Church also participate in a city-wide church council that serves more than 100 other meeting points with about 20,000 believers.

The seminary she attended in Shenyang in the 1980s only had one full-time instructor. Hong decided to pursue further education in the West, even though it meant being separated from her husband and young son. "I knew I would miss my family, but I felt it was necessary for me to have more training," she said.

Family stress: Hong thinks she will also be more empathetic because of the difficulties she faced living apart from her family. "In the past, when the believers would tell me about their family problems, I sometimes didn't understand them because everything was fine in my life. Now I think I will have more patience," she said.

"Before I came to the United States, I offered my whole life for the work of the church," she said. "Here I have learned that God wants us to take care of our family as well. I want to tell my believers about this. They have tended to idealize me."

Growing up, Hong said she never heard anyone talk about the Bible, even though her mother and grandparents are Christian. "It was during the Cultural Revolution and to speak about God was a dangerous thing," she said.

Communist childhood: Since Hong was unaware of her family's faith, she participated in Communist organizations. She even became the Communist Youth League general secretary for her class when she was a teenager. "I thought I would have a high stature in Chinese society—I was preparing for that kind of life," she said.

Her grandparents moved back to Shenyang when the Dong Guan Church reopened in 1979. When the Northeast Seminary reopened in 1982, Hong's grandmother told her that she wanted Hong to study there.

"I was against attending the seminary because I thought I would lose everything I had worked for. I thought people wouldn't accept me," said Hong, who was 20 years old at the time.

Hong's parents had been childless for four years before she was born in June 1962. Her grandmother explained to her how her mother had promised God that if she would become pregnant or be able to adopt a baby she would dedicate that child to the work of the church.

When Hong failed her university entrance exams, her grandmother encouraged her to listen to God's will.

She reluctantly agreed to enroll in the seminary. As time went on, she was moved by the faith of her fellow students: "Many had quit successful jobs. Some were forced to work in the countryside during the Cultural Revolution. Yet they still had this love for God."

Through her experiences in the United States, Hong realized that "we are all children in God's family. I didn't have a picture of the worldwide church before. It made me see how great God is." She expressed appreciation to the Mennonite church for giving her the opportunity to study at Eastern Mennonite University and Seminary. *Carla Reimer*

Honduran Mennos celebrate end of conscription

Tegucigalpa, Honduras (MCC/MWC)—Honduran Mennonites rejoiced when the Honduran Congress recently amended its constitution, ending obligatory military service and establishing an all-volunteer army.

Honduran Mennonites have struggled to confront the army's methods of forced recruitment in the past several years. The army would stop buses and haul off eligible young men lacking proof of military service.

When this occurred to Mennonite youth, Mennonite church leaders would travel to army bases to demand their release, explaining they were Mennonites and conscientious objectors. They would also appeal to family hardship and other clauses in the law. Although the leaders frequently secured the release of Mennonite draftees, the forced recruitment practice often traumatized the young men and their families.

"We feel satisfied with what the Honduran people have gained. We have felt God's hand in all that has happened," says Oscar Duenas, coordinator of the Honduran Mennonite Church's Peace and Justice Committee.

But Duenas does not see the new voluntary military service law as the end of the church's work on peace issues.

"Our task has been to give life, and we should struggle against all projects that go against life," says Duenas. "Struggling against violence is much broader than just struggling against the armed forces."

And while the new law establishes voluntary military service, it does so only during peace. During times of war, the new law states, "All Hondurans capable of defending and serving the country are soldiers."

The church must work to obtain conscientious objection legislation and alternative service for conscientious objectors in times of war, Duenas says.

Pedro Calix, pastor of the Mennonite church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras' capital, believes the church must also foment a sense of service. "Having voluntary military service doesn't mean young people quit serving their country," he says. "Rather we must create spaces for alternate service." *Daryl Yoder-Bontrager*

Linda Shelly (MCC)

Spaces for service: *Honduran Mennonite youth dig ditches in one of Tegucigalpa's marginal neighborhoods—part of a 1991 alternate service project through the Honduran Mennonite Peace and Justice Committee. The church decided to put into practice a clause of Honduran law that allowed for "service to humanity" as an alternative to armed military service.*

Crosshill (Ont.) Mennonite Church celebrated its 45th anniversary May 21. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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A bike tour through the Holy Land will raise funds for Nazareth Christian Hospital. Sponsored by The Nazareth Project, the fourth annual ride will be held Nov. 3-12. For information, contact Jane Hooley at The Nazareth Project, (717) 392-4365.

• • •

A conference titled "Men: In Search of a Gentler Spirit" was held at Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg April 7-8. Professor David Schroeder, recently retired from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, spoke for a nontraditional view of masculinity. "We say no, the male is not the heroic protector and provider. Both the male and the female provide and protect, and sustain together, in somewhat different ways. ... There is a world of injustice toward women and children in the Christian community," he said, calling men to model "the self-sacrificial love that Jesus manifested by going to the cross for us." (*Christian Week*)

• • •

The treasurer of the Episcopal Church embezzled $2.2 million and spent it on new homes, travel, jewelry and tuition for her children while the financially embattled denomination was slashing staff and programs, the church said May 1. Ellen Cooke, who resigned in January, was able to divert the money between February 1990 and January of this year because she had control over auditing and, in violation of church policy, filled out check request forms and signed them herself. Church officials said Cooke has not been charged with a crime and is cooperating in the investigation and recovery of the funds. Church officials have not decided whether to press charges. Cooke was treasurer for eight years and earned more than $120,000 a year. (*The Wichita Eagle*)

Howard Zehr (MCC)

A boy in Yambio, Sudan, receives a bar of soap. Numerous requests are rapidly depleting MCC's stock of school kits and bar soap in particular. MCC typically sends some 22,000 school kits annually. School kit requests this year already total more than 37,000. MCC staffer Kevin King attributes the rising requests to civil unrest: "There are more displaced people and makeshift schools for children, and we're being called upon to provide school supplies. This year 80 to 90 percent of the school kits are going to places experiencing unrest."

• • •

Eddie Bauer, the retail clothing chain, has joined other U.S. companies in withdrawing from Burma, according to *The Corporate Examiner*, a publication of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. Burma has faced increasing criticism because of its repressive human rights record. According to the Interfaith Center, Liz Claiborne, Levi Strauss and Amoco also have halted business with Burma. The center noted that the city council of Berkeley, Calif., earlier this year passed a resolution barring the city from buying goods and services from companies operating in Burma because of reported human rights abuses. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

COMMENTARY

The church's witness to the militia

The Oklahoma City bombing *has awakened America to the potential of terrorism from within.* How should the church respond?

Gene Stoltzfus

When Timothy McVeigh returned from war in the Persian Gulf, his friends said he was a changed man. He was a member of the crew of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle of the First Armored Division that buried hundreds of Iraqi soldiers dead and alive in the desert. Today he faces the charge of bombing the federal building in Oklahoma City April 19.

Military victory in the desert did not convince McVeigh or 10,000 fellow militiamen that life would be better after victory in the Gulf. Where was the joy of the returning victorious warrior, the celebration that the sacrifice for the larger good made it all worthwhile? The vitality, so often reflected at the completion of a just project, was missing.

McVeigh returned to a "new world order" vaguely defined by then-President Bush and got involved with people in the militias across the United States. That new order did not include anything for him.

Social dislocations: McVeigh is part of a predominantly white, male, working-class sector that—like women and people of color in the poor and middle class—has been buffeted by global economic restructuring, with its attendant job losses, declining real wages and social dislocations. While under economic stress, this sector has also seen its traditional privileges and status challenged by social justice movements such as feminism, affirmative action, gay rights and environmentalism. In reaction, McVeigh sought stability. In the militia, he found it.

Our church's peace witness must be large enough to engage economically embattled peoples with a fresh vision energized by the gospel of peace. Like other marginalized groups of our society, these white males see little hope. The small farm is gone. The security of the past is no more. So they turn to a pagan religious framework built on the remnants of segregationists and a method of change based on organized violence reminiscent of gangs, organized crime and Islamic Jihad.

By engaging the real forces at work in the world as a church, we will be able to engage McVeigh and the thousands who are tempted by his demented notions of redemptive violence. Matters of common concern might be the centralization of economic power and the senseless use of law enforcement tools at Waco, Texas.

It is an opportunity fraught with danger and hope. My understanding of biblical faith is one in which the healing of the heart is completed with miracles of confrontation and transformation in the marketplace, as Jesus overturned the money changers' tables. It includes Pentecost, where ethnic and class lines are transformed into a new community of the common good. It is characterized by careful actions in confused settings that allow Christians to hammer out a vision worth living for and dying for. Like Paul in Philippi, who went to jail because he meddled in economic affairs and the worldview of the town's moneyed classes (Acts 16:16ff.), we need to see where the gospel of peace can penetrate.

Now is the time when our churches can be a watchtower in the night to overcome confusion and point the way through the worship of a God who calls all people to the fullness of life. Carrying out this vision will require skills in taking the faith to the marketplace. We realistically act as plumb lines for justice when we aren't afraid to carry our faith into the marketplace. In our efforts to heal and preach in the name of Jesus for all of creation, we can summon forth the gift to transform our national holy places into prayer meetings for renewal of life. We can pray that the God of history will call all our congregations and church projects to be training grounds for God's militia of peacemakers.

Gene Stoltzfus staffs Christian Peacemaker Teams, a joint initiative of the Mennonites and Church of the Brethren.

MCC worker writes of three-in-one miracle

Bwadlorens, Haiti (MCC)—"It's a miracle of God," said my passengers as I drove them home to Bwadlorens, a town in northeast Haiti.

The passengers were rejoicing because they had no hospital bill. I was rejoicing because despite my inexperience in midwifery, I had just helped in an unusual but successful delivery.

Shortly after sunset, we—myself, Madam Apolon and five of her family members and friends—had left Bwadlorens. They had asked me to take Madam Apolon to the hospital; she had been in labor for almost 24 hours, and the midwife did not foresee birth any time soon.

The trip to Hospital Byenfezans, 40 km./24 miles away over rough dirt roads, usually takes about two hours. Now I had to drive slower because of Madam Apolon's sensitivity, so after two hours, we were only halfway to the hospital.

A half hour later, Madam Apolon asked me to stop again. We waited while she went through several contractions. Just as she was about to get back into the Land-Rover, she felt another contraction coming.

She squatted down, as Haitian women in labor typically do. This time a tiny head began to appear. I grabbed some gloves from the vehicle's first-aid kit and made it to her just in time to catch a baby boy.

As we waited for her to deliver the placenta, we were surprised to see another head, and, after Baby No. 2, another foot.

Despite the breech position, Baby No. 3 was soon delivered. We initially thought he was dead. But then he made a slight arm movement. Madam Apolon's friends encouraged the baby to cry by blowing on him and banging a pot by his head. While another person held him head down, I tapped on the baby's chest to loosen secretions in his lungs.

Several times it appeared he was no longer breathing, so I blew short puffs of air into his nose and mouth. After 20 to 30 minutes, the baby let out some stronger cries.

We didn't have anything to cut the umbilical cords with. Two people hopped into the Land-Rover with me and we drove to the closest town, five minutes away. At the third house we found a razor blade.

We returned, and, with some string from the truck, I tied and cut the cords.

The family had been mentally preparing for a cesarean section, so a roadside birth saved them high medical costs. And, although I'm a nurse, this was the first time I had helped with a delivery—and not a typical one at that!—and all three babies were alive. Indeed, the event was a miracle of God. *MCC health educator Margaret De Jong*

Roadside maternity: *Margaret De Jong with Apolon and her triplets at 2 1/2 months.*

Linda Shelly (MCC)

A Christian model of health care must be holistic, Dr. Donna Willis told the Mennonite Health Assembly at Rockville, Md., March 23-26. Willis teaches at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and is a medical correspondent for NBC's *Today Show*. "What has curative medicine cured?" she asked. "Ninety percent of what we know of disease is preventable." She called for a holistic health-care system that begins in communities and within churches.

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An eighth grader expelled from a public school for smoking marijuana has resumed his education at an Amish school. At the invitation of friends of the family, Jonathan Fizer started class April 10 at an Amish school near Middlebury, Ind. "They offered because they know Jonathan's been very bored," his mother, Robin Fizer, said. "It's very odd, isn't it, that they'll accept him and our school won't." (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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Doctors in Jerusalem have identified a psychological disorder unique to the city. Dubbed the Jerusalem Syndrome, the affliction strikes travelers who snap under the historical and religious weight of the city and begin to believe that they themselves are the Messiah or the Virgin Mary or King David, or, more commonly, God or Satan. Many of these people have similar histories: a deeply religious childhood followed by an adolescent rebellion against their faith and an eventual falling away. Backsliders appear to be more vulnerable, because their image of Jerusalem is sometimes drawn in a child's hand, unamended by adult reasoning. Most believe for an average of five to seven days that they are some form of divinity; then they step back into the milder religious atmosphere of America or Europe as if nothing had happened. (*The Atlantic Monthly*)

White South African traffic officer A.C. du Preez recently pulled his motorcycle up beside a double-parked car and shouted, "Remove the bloody car!" The driver replied there was no need for rudeness, and Du Preez warned him not to answer back. The black driver, however, continued to argue. Du Preez grabbed the driver by the throat and sent him off to the police station. The driver was at the station 20 minutes before the officer discovered that the driver was Sydney Mufamadi, South Africa's new Minister of Police. (*Encounter*)

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With more than 70,000 members, total assets being managed by MMA at the end of 1994 rose to more than $560 million, a 17 percent increase from the 1993 level of $482 million. Total assets are expected to increase to more than $650 million by the end of 1995. Total equity for all of MMA increased by $10.2 million. "Our work is only beginning," says Howard Brenneman, MMA president. "Our vision is that every eligible Anabaptist will be touched by an MMA program or service by the year 2000. ... New relationships with other denominations are also emerging that present tremendous new possibilities."

• • •

A new computer conference on restorative justice in cases of domestic violence is being organized by Mennonite Central Committee Canada's Victim-Offender Ministries and Women's Concerns programs and the Winnipeg-based Voices for Non-Violence. The goal is to find a multistep mediation approach that can be applied to domestic violence. To participate in the conference write Restorative Justice and Abuse, P.O. Box 2038, Clearbrook, BC V2T 3T8 or contact Heather Block via e-mail at mccmbvnv@web.apc.org.

Conflict grows in Nigeria

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

Water or weapons? *MCC Nigeria country representative Dan Jantzi (left), Nigerian MCC worker Yakubu Joseph (center) and a church member sit on a water storage tank that Muslims mistook for an arms cache until mediation cleared up the matter.*

Jos, Nigeria (MCC)—The middle ground between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria is shrinking.

Over the past 15 years growing tension between Christians (in the south) and Muslims (in the north) has resulted in some 5,000 deaths. Some fear Nigeria could plunge into full-scale war.

"It's a trial for us. It will take the grace of God and the leading of the Spirit not to fight back," says Yakubu Joseph, a young Nigerian who works with Mennonite Central Committee in Borno state.

He recently attended a church service in which the married men were asked to contribute to buy weapons in case Muslims attacked. Several Protestant groups MCC relates to recently issued a press release calling Christians to "their responsibility of self-defense."

But dialogue is also beginning, says Rev. Musa Gotom, an MCC Nigeria board member who heads the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN). Some church groups are planning meetings between Muslim and Christian leaders. Rev. Gotom calls these "preventive" measures. "We don't want to wait for things to go up in flames and then come with supplies to help the survivors survive," he says.

Columbia Bible College

invites applications for the position of

Academic Dean

Starting date to be negotiated. The successful candidate, possessing maturity and integrity in his or her spiritual commitment and being in accord with the vision and theology of the college, should have demonstrated administrative and relational skills and leadership abilities. The successful candidate should have appropriate academic training, preferably an earned doctorate.

Desired qualities are
- an understanding of the Mennonite constituency of British Columbia
- a knowledge of the current educational scene
- a significant teaching experience

Send resume, by Sept. 30, to

Dr. Walter Unger, President, Columbia Bible College,
2940 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC V2T 2Z8; (604) 853-3358;
fax (604) 853-3063.

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

MINISTERS

Mike Bogard, Western District Conference youth minister, was ordained April 30.

Harold Buller has retired as chaplain at Community Hospital, Beatrice, Neb.

Richard Davis will be pastor at Peace Church, Dallas, Texas, beginning July 1.

Eldon Epp will begin as pastor at Manhattan (Kan.) Church in September.

Heather S. Esau will participate in the Ministry Intern Program this summer, serving at Southern Hills Church, Topeka, Kan.

Judy Karmon is half-time pastor for one year at Faith Church, Downey, Calif.

John Sprunger, pastor at Herold Church, Bessie, Okla., will retire from ministry Sept. 30.

WORKERS

Jennifer Alexander, Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., began a two-year MCC term in January in Akron, Pa., as a mail clerk.

Andrea Dyck, First Church, Saskatoon, began a two-year MCC term in August 1994 in Saskatoon as a receptionist and resource coordinator at MCC Saskatchewan.

Betty and **Bill Enns**, Bethel Bergthaler Church, Winkler, Man., are beginning five-year MCC terms in Lesotho as country co-representatives. They previously served in Canada.

Deborah L. Fast, Breslau (Ont.) Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Akron, Pa., as editor of the MCC magazine. She previously served with MCC in Kenya.

Gingrich

Karin Gingrich, Salem (Ore.) Church, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Akron, Pa., where she works as a purchasing assistant with Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Hildebrandt

Rae Lynn Hildebrandt, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, began a one-year MCC term in February in Saskatoon as operations manager at Self-Help Crafts of the World Saskatchewan.

Hinz-Penner

Raylene Hinz-Penner, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., begins as institutional advancement associate at Bethel College, North Newton, Aug. 1.

Janzen

Paul Janzen, Peace Church, Saskatoon, began a one-year MCC term in September 1994 in Saskatoon, where he manages a furniture thrift store.

R. Nafziger

Ruth Nafziger, Hillcrest Church, New Hamburg, Ont., began a two-year MCC term in January in New Hamburg as a thrift store co-manager.

Larry Nafziger and **Jane Snider**, Ottawa (Ont.) Church, are beginning three-year MCC terms in Kenya with Self-Help Crafts of the World. They previously served with MCC in Uganda.

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Zaire now has more Mennonite Brethren than any other country. The Zairian MB church grew almost 20 percent in 1994, increasing its membership from 58,000 to 69,400. Zaire's MB membership now surpasses that of India, where membership is estimated to be 65,000. Both countries far surpass the United States (17,000) and Canada (28,000). (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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Peace Tax Canada has prepared a document urging the Canadian government to support and emulate nongovernmental organizations' work for peace and justice. The document outlines the goals and achievements of several peace and justice groups, including Christian Peacemaker Teams. The document also calls the United Nations to transform its traditional military-style peacekeeping into the mediation-based peacemaking modeled by groups like Christian Peacemaker Teams. (*Signs of the Times*)

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Dalton Jantzi went on a paid leave of absence Jan. 22 from his work as pastor at Black Creek Faith Community, Kitchener, Ont., and as chaplain at the Jane Finch Ministry in Downsview, Ont. Jantzi took the leave at the direction of the Leadership Commission of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada following nine accusations of violation of sexual boundaries, including three complaints from minors, that arose at Warden Woods Mennonite Church, Scarborough, Ont., where Jantzi is also active. The commission has now appointed two people to work with Jantzi in his ministry and has set a two-year probation period during which Jantzi's work will be monitored. Jantzi is also to contribute to the costs of the investigation and counseling of victims (sum not yet determined). (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Mennonite Collegiate Institute invites applications for 1995-96 for the following positions:

- **Music director**—Developing choral skills is the primary responsibility. Other duties may include conducting the band, directing the musical and providing private vocal or instrumental instruction. Teacher certification, musical excellence and enthusiasm for working with teenagers are expected.

- **Residence administrator**—Providing overall leadership for the residence program for 110 students and overseeing three residence life coordinators is the focus of this new full-time position. Strong interpersonal and administrative skills, maturity and self-confidence in dealing with young people, and post-secondary Christian school education are desirable qualifications.

Please forward your résumé to **Allan Dueck, Principal, MCI, Box 250, Gretna, MB R0G 0V0, (204) 327-5891, fax (204) 327-5872.**

Health-care management in a retirement community/long-term-care setting. 102 apartments, 88-bed skilled nursing home, 32-bed residential care home and 16 MR/DD group-home beds. Responsibilities will include: management of the business office, subsidized apartments for the elderly and home health care. Qualifications should include business orientation, Christian commitment and an entrepreneurial spirit.

Send résumé with cover letter stating salary requirement to **Administrator, Beth Haven Nursing Home, 2500 Pleasant St., Hannibal, MO 63401-2699**. Equal opportunity employer

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Intellectual Yet Fun Urban Mennonite Church seeks Dedicated Full-Time Pastor.

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Send résumé to **Linda Headings, 652 Springs Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45255; (513) 753-5867**.

Mennonite Central Committee needs a **canner operator**. This voluntary service worker position is available this summer and requires a two-year commitment. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. The canner operator is part of a 3-man crew that travels to 30 communities in 11 states from October to April canning meat with local groups. Summer months are spent in Akron, Pa., working on canner maintenance and a variety of tasks. Applicants should have relational and mechanical skills and previous job experience with equipment.

Interested people in the United States contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151**. In Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381**.

Shalom Mennonite Church invites applications for **pastor**. Shalom Mennonite Church is an open, diverse church with a strong sense of ministry to our neighborhood. We are approximately 125 members from many walks of life, including small-business owners, college professors, denominational staff people, construction industry employees, etc. We are a growing, young congregation, looking for a pastor (woman or man) with vision and gifts for enabling the congregation.

Primary responsibilities are in worship leading, pastoral care, community relationships and some counseling and teaching. Starting date—fall or winter of 1995. Salary and benefits will reflect conference guidelines. All applications are confidential. Please send inquiry by **June 2** to

The Pastoral Search Committee
Shalom Mennonite Church
c/o Joe Loganbill
715 E. Fourth St.
Newton, KS 67114

The **education department** at **Goshen College** announces a full-time, one-year position for the 1995-96 academic year. The teaching load includes reading (developmental reading and reading problems, children's literature), early childhood (learning environments and child development) and supervision of elementary student teachers. Doctorate in education preferred; master's degree required with study in literacy, early childhood and elementary education. Teaching experience in elementary classrooms is required. Responsibilities include: teaching classes and supervising student teachers; arranging supervising field experiences for courses; participating with education faculty in curriculum development; involvement in research, development and service in local school communities and in professional organizations; and participating in the life of the college community. Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

The music department at **Goshen College** announces a half-time position in **piano and keyboard theory** for the 1995-96 academic year. The successful candidate should have a master's degree in piano pedagogy and/or performance and experience in both one-on-one and group instruction. The teaching assignment will include teaching elementary and intermediate level piano for adults and children and possibly piano pedagogy courses for undergraduates. Ability to offer instruction in either organ or harpsichord would be desirable. This position is offered as a one-year contract with potential for renewal. Additional employment in the Goshen College Piano Preparatory Program is possible, depending upon demand and the candidate's experience. Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Central Christian High School has openings for the following positions: **maintenance director** (immediate), **grant writer** and **teaching positions** in English, Bible, science, instrumental music and vocal music.

Direct inquiries to **Frederic Miller, P.O. Box 9, Kidron, OH 44636; (216) 857-7311; fax (216) 857-7331.**

Freeman Academy has the following positions open for the 1995-96 school year:

- **9 to 12 English**, full-time position, w/wo computer/accounting, w/ declam, yearbook, w/wo boys or girls basketball, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.

- **9 to 12 science**, full-time position, w/wo computers/accounting, w/wo boys or girls basketball, w/wo athletic director, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.

Send résumé, credentials, transcripts to **Larry Horner, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029; (605) 925-4237**.

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A resource for adults who understand that children need a special time in worship to learn that they are loved and accepted by God and their Christian community.
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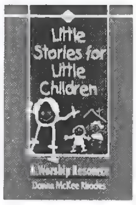

We Are the Pharisees
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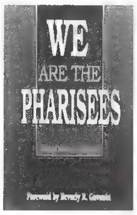
What? Me? A Pharisee? Why do we think of Pharisees as hypocrites and legalistic nitpickers? By identifying with the Pharisees instead of denouncing them, we can address the pride, hypocrisy, and legalism in ourselves and in our churches.
Paper, $9.95; in Canada $14.20.



Available through your local bookstore or by calling 1 800 759-4447; in Canada call 519 746-2872 (Provident Bookstores—MC, Visa, Discover). If ordering by mail, please include 10% for shipping—minimum $2.50. Canadian customers, add 7% of total for GST.

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Send nominations or letters of inquiry by June 19 to:
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P.O. Box 1142
Elkhart, IN 46515-1142
Telephone: 219 294-7523; Fax: 219 293-7446.

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Bluffton College
280 West College Avenue
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by June 23, 1995

for the position starting with preparation time sometime during the period January to June, 1996, and presidential responsibilities to be assumed July 1, 1996. All applications and inquiries will be held in confidence. Bluffton College is an equal-opportunity, affirmative action employer.

Bluffton College
280 W College Ave
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Reviews

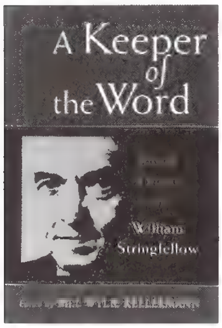
BOOKS

ANGRY MAN'S THEOLOGY

A Keeper of the Word: Selected Writings of William Stringfellow, *edited by Bill Wylie Kellermann (Eerdmans, 1994, 448 pages)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

One of the happiest weeks of my life was spent with the notorious theologian, William Stringfellow, the man Martin Marty once called "Protestantism's angry middle-aged man."



Stringfellow spent a week addressing mainline pastors in the city where I lived. Barely out of university and with an eye toward seminary, I was Stringfellow's chauffeur and "go-fer." At the meetings I was the youngest by several decades, and Stringfellow was the one I could relate to the easiest.

Stringfellow challenged people's ease. One day a well-fed pastor suggested that Stringfellow's "dark" outlook was a result of years spent living in Harlem and later years battling cancer. Perhaps so, I thought, but I wondered whether that pastor's opposite, overly-optimistic outlook might have something to do with his own affluence.

Since then Stringfellow has been a favorite theologian. (I was happy to see that Stringfellow penned a few pieces for *The Mennonite* in the 1960s.) But although I attended three different seminaries, I never read him as part of an official bibliography. By now Stringfellow's books are out of print, so this volume is particularly welcome.

There are many reasons why Stringfellow has been ignored, but his influence is undeniable. Kellermann, editor of this volume, partly credits Stringfellow with today's resurgent interest in the powers and principalities; Stringfellow's early work on this subject influenced Walter Wink's biblical explorations.

Jim Wallis and numerous *Sojourners* writers also cite Stringfellow as an influence. Stringfellow was also a close friend of Philip and Daniel Berrigan and a leading voice in the anti-war movement.

I particularly like how Stringfellow looks at biblical texts from unexpected angles, yielding new insights. He writes, "So in the Bible … I look for style not stereotype, for precedent not model, for parable not proposition, for analogue not aphorism, for paradox not syllogism, for signs not statutes."

Read this book and you may never think the same way about charismatic gifts, the fall, the Holy Spirit, the demonic, Christian decision making, vocation, prayer, judgment, institutions, the resurrection, idolatry, dehumanization or saints. And Stringfellow manages to blend all these ponderings with a love of the circus.

This book deserves to be read and lovingly reread. (It also has an excellent index.) Stringfellow has influenced my life and ministry, but I hope his influence goes much farther. This could be just the book to accomplish that goal.

COs AND THE MENTALLY ILL

The Turning Point: How Persons of Conscience Brought about Major Change in the Care of America's Mentally Ill *by Alex Sareyan (Herald Press, 1994, 314 pages)*

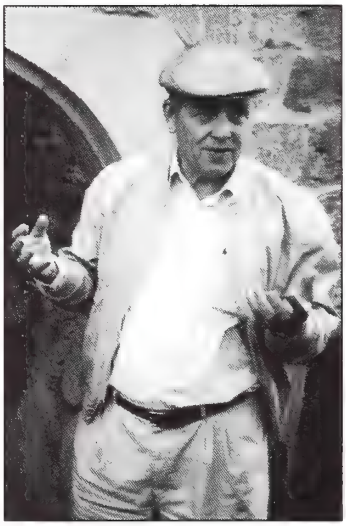
Reviewed by Arthur Jost, Hilliard, Ohio

The Turning Point is a story of grace. Men and women who often felt they faced a dead end changed the treatment of the mentally ill.

Under the alternate service program during World War II, one-fourth of 12,000 conscientious objectors (approximately 40 percent Mennonite) volunteered to work in 61 state mental hospitals and training schools for the mentally retarded.

Many of the hospitals were dirty and deteriorating with unsympathetic, untrained, sometimes criminal staff. Often a CO was handed keys to a department and told to care for a hundred or more patients. Motivated by Christian love and compassion, the COs—and the wives, friends and summer volunteers who joined them—in time effected radical change in the care of the mentally ill and mentally retarded.

Some Mennonite COs in mental hospital service channeled their experiences into establishing the Mennonite mental health program and built and



Faith of our Fathers (and Mothers)...

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operated mental hospitals in the United States.

While care in mental institutions improved greatly, later down-sizing caused institutions to release many chronic patients who eventually found themselves in prison or on the streets.

Sareyan, a former CO, now director of the Mental Health Materials Center, relates the Civilian Public Service experience to progress in treating the mentally ill; however, he leaves a gap in showing how the CPS experience could apply today in caring for the mentally ill in our homes, on our streets and in our prisons.

Sareyan sees another major "turning point" at hand and asks, Where are the architects and builders to implement the plan of action now so desperately needed?

The Turning Point will be of particular interest to Mennonites who served or had family members that served in mental hospitals during World War II, and to people exploring change in the care of the mentally ill.

PICTURES OF STRUGGLE, HOPE

A Dry Roof and a Cow: Dreams and Portraits of Our Neighbours
(Mennonite Central Committee, 1994, 152 pages)

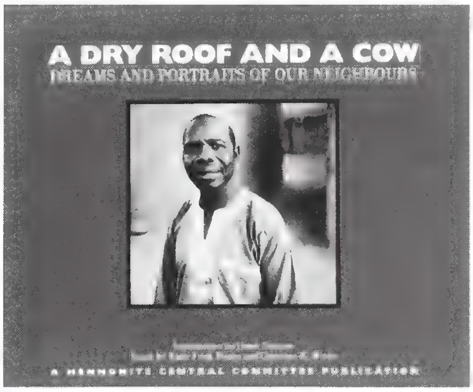
Reviewed by Terry Rempel, Chicago

A Dry Roof and a Cow, Mennonite Central Committee's 75th-anniversary book, is a collection of the struggles and hopes of more than 50 individuals from seven countries where MCC has served.

A young man from Bangladesh writes of his dream to one day have a cow. An elderly woman grieves the loss of her son while sharing, in the same breath, her hope for peace. These are the dreams of some of today's prophets, writes Henri Nouwen in the introduction. In the midst of poverty they share their simple, powerful hope in God.

The black and white photos are poignant but not intrusive; they welcome the reader into the lives of each individual. The essay by Katie Funk Wiebe and Christine Wiebe challenges the reader to enter humbly into "the blessing—that is encouragement, hope and healing—[which] is hidden in those who stand on the margins of society."

It would have been easy to dwell on the accomplishments of MCC during the past 75 years, but MCC has wisely chosen to take an approach consistent with its mission to serve "in the name of Christ." *A Dry Roof and a Cow* is not a tally of MCC work but a book that captures a vision of service through the dreams and hopes of God's people around the world.


A DRY ROOF AND A COW
DREAMS AND PORTRAITS OF OUR NEIGHBOURS
A MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PUBLICATION

The book is a useful source for reflection and a challenge to move from our own "centers of existence" and discover the hope and power of God's truth in a world where so many live in poverty. "Some sisters say this dream is 'greener than a parrot'—that is, that's too much hope," writes Filomena Saucedos from Bolivia, "but we have to have confidence that the Lord can do everything and will help us."

Resources

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- **Beyond the News: Murder Close Up** is a 30-minute video in a series on violence, asking, Is it possible to forgive a murderer? It interviews several victims of violence. Study guide is included. To order call Mennonite Media Ministries, 1-800-999-3534, or write MMM at 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801-2497; $24.95 U.S./$34.95 Cdn.
- **Dear God, I'm Only a Boy** by Menno Duerksen (Wordsworth, 1995, $17.95 U.S.) is the author's story of growing up in a Mennonite farm family in western Oklahoma during the Depression.
- **Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin** by Cornelius Plantinga, Jr. (Eerdmans, 1995, $19.99 U.S.) presents a brief account of the nature and dynamics of sin.
- **From Christ to the World: Introductory Readings in Christian Ethics**, edited by Wayne G. Boulton, Thomas D. Kennedy and Allen Verhey (Eerdmans, 1994, $24.99 U.S.) presents the basic features of Christian moral theories, explores contemporary issues such as sexuality, medical practices, ecology and politics.
- **Anti-Immigrant Backlash**, Facts Have Faces Series (National Council of Churches Office on Global Education), is a brief study/action guide on the rise of anti-immigrant bias in the United States. Order prepaid from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; $.30 each or 4/$1.
- **Ecology & Liberation: A New Paradigm** by Leonardo Boff (Orbis Books, 1995, $14.95 U.S.) provides the outlines of a new paradigm for theology.
- **Passion for the Earth: The Christian Vocation to Promote Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation** by Sean McDonagh (Orbis Books, 1995, $13.95 U.S.) suggests ways in which sustainable development and justice for all the world's creatures are attainable.
- **Christianity & Civil Society: Theological Education for Public Life**, edited by Rodney L. Petersen (Orbis Books, 1995, $16.95 U.S.), presents essays exploring the social significance of Christianity, with emphasis on preparation of church leaders for the 21st century.
- **Stepping Stones of the Steward: A Faith Journey through Jesus' Parables** by Ronald E. Vallet (Eerdmans, 1995, 2nd ed., $10.99 U.S.) uses the images of journey and steward as metaphors for the Christian life.
- **Getting Out of Your Kids' Faces and Into their Hearts** by Valerie Bell (Zondervan, 1995, $10.99 U.S.) is a parent's guide for nurturing kids without nagging.
- **Slow Miracles: Urban Women Fighting for Liberation** by G.F. Thompson (LuraMedia, 1995, $11.95 U.S.) shares stories of courageous women living in America's urban core who fight for dignity.

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Editorial

A good servant but a bad master

Do we handle our wealth, or does our wealth handle us? We live in a society addicted to consumption. One of the church's main tasks is to help us free ourselves from such consumerism and to call others to that freedom.

Many of us try to live that delicate balance between sharing what we have with others and providing enough security for ourselves and our family. But our context makes practicing faithfulness with our wealth difficult. "Our entire economic system is based on human desire's being inexhaustible, on there being a potential market for almost anything we can produce," writes Paul L. Wachtel in his book *The Poverty of Affluence* (New Society Publishers, 1989).

He shows how in the past few decades in the United States real per capita income rose significantly (e.g., 28 percent in the 1970s). Yet people feel less and less fulfilled. Economic abundance and personal dissatisfaction seem to go hand in hand. Our society holds on to the belief that we will be happier if we just have more disposable income. But the evidence is otherwise. "Having more and more does not really leave us feeling fuller or more fulfilled," says Wachtel.

If we are to be faithful to God we will have to look hard at how we handle our wealth. Doing so will be difficult.

Jesus put it more starkly: "You cannot serve God and wealth" (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13). For Jesus, how we handle our wealth is not just a question of stewardship but a question of idolatry. Money is not only a means of exchange, pieces of green (or red or blue or purple) paper, but part of a system of belief that can draw us away from undivided loyalty to God.

When discussing belief, the Bible refers more often to how we use our wealth than it does to what we *think* about God, what our ideas are. In the Hebrew Scriptures, faithfulness is often tied to how we treat widows and orphans. New Testament writers also address wealth: "But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Timothy 6:9-10).

Individualistic habits: "Senseless and harmful desires" describes well our commercialized culture. How many catalogs do you receive each week? How many direct-mail appeals? The competition for our dollars is fierce, and we dare not treat it lightly. Temptations abound to use our money frivolously instead of for good. And because our economic system pushes us away from community and more and more into individualistic habits (for instance, catalogs coming into our homes), we need to talk with one another about how we use our wealth.

Wachtel shows how along with economic growth has come a diminishment of community. He shares a well-known parable of a sinner being shown heaven and hell. The man sees two large doors and is led through one of them. When he smells delectable foods and sees people around a large food-laden table, he assumes he is in heaven. But "the people look emaciated and groan with hunger. Each has a spoon with a very long handle that can reach the food in the middle. But because the handles are so much longer than their arms, none can get the food into their mouths." The man realizes he is in hell. Through the other door he finds the same situation, except here the people look cheerful and well fed. The difference? They have learned to feed each other.

A French proverb says, "Money is a good servant but a bad master." If we are to be faithful to God we will have to look hard at how we handle our wealth. And we will need to discern together with other Christians how best to share what we have. Doing so will be difficult in our commercialized culture, which daily invites us to believe that having more will make us happier. The Scriptures as well as experience tell us it won't. *Gordon Houser*

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THE
Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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Anita Amstutz seeks the spiritual life in San Francisco.

Mennonites in the city

- Spiritual life in the city (see page 3)
- A source of strength (see page 5)
- 'I wanted to make a difference' (see page 7)

Prologue

More and more Mennonites are leaving rural areas and moving into urban areas. Mennonites in the city discover new challenges, new opportunities for ministry and sometimes new energy. In San Francisco, members of First Mennonite Church have banded together to be a church family that helps one another as well as those around them.

Anita Amstutz, who served as interim pastor there until April 15, talks about her desire to live a spiritual life (see page 3) and how she has pursued that in the city.

Carla Reimer, news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church, who wrote the three main articles in this issue, interviewed five members of First Mennonite Church in San Francisco (page 5) to find out what their church means to them.

She also talked with Sharon Heath (page 7), who came to the Mennonite church via Mennonite Voluntary Service.

With the reminiscences during this 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, Ted Grimsrud challenges its designation as a "good war" (page 10).

In our Bible column (page 11), Bill Hallsted playfully looks at the importance of our spiritual diet.

And read about Terry and Gladys Terichow's journey from rural life to the inner city (page 12). *gh*

Next issue: How to do evangelism

Cover: Photo by Russ Schmidt

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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Mennonite pastor Anita Amstutz's spiritual life has been strengthened in a Mennonite church in San Francisco.

Spiritual life in the city

Carla Reimer

At her home in Berkeley, Calif., Anita Amstutz likes to start her day by stretching her limbs. Once she is finished with moving her muscles, she tries to spend some time in quiet reflection through prayer, reading and journaling.

Anita sees the physical and intellectual aspects of her morning ritual as equally important in the development of her spiritual life. However, she says, it has taken her a number of years to discover how to be spiritual in ways that are meaningful to her.

Her family and church community stressed the need for spiritual development. "As a child, I knew the importance of daily devotions and prayer. When I was baptized at the Kidron [Ohio] Mennonite Church at age 9, I was told that was the beginning of my discipleship," says Anita, who served as interim pastor at First Mennonite Church in San Francisco until April 15.

"People in my community used actions to embody the gospel. There was more focus on the ethics of living," she says. "Anabaptists are always struggling against something 'out there.' Your spiritual life was just a given.

"What I was looking for was something different. I was like a mystic. If I had been a part of the Roman Catholic Church, I would have found what I was looking for because the Catholics have a long history of contemplation. But there weren't those kind of resources available to me in high school."

After graduating from Hesston (Kan.) College, Amstutz had no further sense of direction. "I was depressed. I felt like my spirituality wasn't grounded. I didn't know how to pray," she says. "I didn't know how to start my faith pilgrimage."

A year of discipling: So Anita was thankful when she learned about a voluntary service unit in Richmond, Va., that focused on the spiritual disciplines. She joined the unit, sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions, in fall 1983, about nine months after she graduated from Hesston College. "It was a wonderful experience. We were all interested in peacemaking and simple living. It was a year of discipling," Anita says.

The unit members worked at regular jobs during the day and spent their evenings reading and discussing books. Anita recalls how one book in particular—*Practicing the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence—helped her arrive at a new understanding of her faith. "Brother Lawrence talked about how you can pray while making bread or scrubbing the dishes. Prayer is woven through all of life. That's

> ***"You can pray while making bread or scrubbing the dishes. Prayer is woven throughout all of life."***
>
> **Anita Amstutz**

Russ Schmidt

> ***"We are trying to figure out how to move between two worlds. It is painful because we often don't feel a part of the broader world, yet we don't feel a part of the Mennonite world either."***
>
> **Anita Amstutz**

where we have to start.

"I have always been an active person. It is hard for me to sit in a corner and pray. So I began to practice praying while I biked or I turned on some music and danced." She also began to journal every day, expressing whatever was on her mind—her relationship with God, a conversation, maybe a movie.

Anita stayed in Richmond for another six years following her voluntary service. She attended a local university, where she received a social work degree, then worked at a number of community-based organizations. But after five years of this kind of work, she found she was "tired and restless" and longing to find her spiritual center again.

Mennonite roots: In spring 1990 she chose Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., as the next location for her faith journey. While the seminary turned out to be "a nurturing place" for Anita, she still felt like "something was missing." The arts, which she was rediscovering in her own life, were peripheral.

After spending a couple of weeks studying dance and creative writing at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, Anita thought she might want to continue her studies there instead of Elkhart. "I was in agony. I wanted to be in a more ecumenical setting, but at the same time I wondered whether I would be deserting my Mennonite roots," she says.

Anita also realized that a move to a non-Mennonite school could have direct consequences on her future job options: "I knew I would be marginalized in the church for not graduating from a Mennonite institution. I would not become a mainstream Mennonite leader."

On the other hand, she never wanted to be a "traditional pastor" and was worried about the kind of person she would become if she had little contact outside of the traditional Mennonite community. "The Mennonite church provides a powerful safety net. It is a place I can feel at home in. It is so much of who I am," she says.

"Yet community-oriented faith can become very insular," Anita says. "It doesn't allow the influence of outside sources—you are afraid of the world, you are afraid of other religions. The community ethos is so strong it becomes a kind of sieve."

In August 1992, Anita decided to leave Elkhart for Berkeley. In May 1994 she graduated with a Master of Divinity degree from the Pacific School of Religion and is now pursuing a master of arts degree in theology at the same school.

Many other members of First Mennonite Church in San Francisco have left predominantly Mennonite communities in search of a different understanding of what it means to be a Christian, Anita says. "We are here trying to figure out how to move between two worlds. It is painful because we often don't feel a part of the broader world, yet we don't feel a part of the Mennonite world either. I feel like I am in an ambivalent place. I see the positives and negatives of both worlds.

"There is a Mennonite way of being that focuses on 'should' and 'shouldn't.' The church often sees things in terms of sin. Even if you don't believe it, you still feel it," Anita says. "There is pressure to be more socially active, to live more simply—but not to live joyfully, enthusiastically, full of the Spirit.

Yet there are other aspects about being Mennonite that Anita "values, loves and cherishes. People really try to live out what they believe—peacemaking, service, love—on a day-to-day basis. I feel like I am imbued with that ethic of living."

But it is her connection with the broader world that allows her "to laugh at [her]self, to let go of [her] need for perfection, to be more human."

As she continues to develop her own sense of spirituality, Anita feels like she is beginning to find ways to integrate the two realities. "I can come from two worlds and feel secure. I feel like I can be a bridge," she says.

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

A source of strength

An interview with five members of First Mennonite Church in San Francisco who have found a new home

Carla Reimer

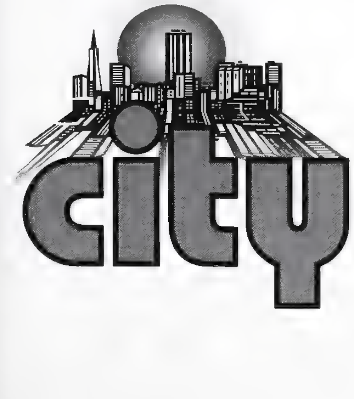
On a Monday evening late last September, five Mennonites in their 20s and 30s gathered in the home of Karen Kreider Yoder in San Francisco to visit with Carla Reimer about their relationship with First Mennonite Church of San Francisco. As they talked, they put the finishing stitches on a quilt.

John Flickinger, Russ Schmidt, Kenda Reeser, Dan Flickinger and Karen Kreider Yoder are among those church members who meet regularly on Monday evenings for quilting. On this particular evening they had the chance to see the fabric for their next quilt, which they would be making for the West Coast Mennonite Central Committee sale.

All five people grew up in Mennonite congregations and attended Mennonite colleges. And while most of them left the church for a period of time, they decided to become involved again. "Mennonites have a rich mix of theology and service that many other denominations are not able to sustain," said Dan.

The five members have lived in San Francisco for varying lengths of time—from about a year to 10 years. They work at diverse jobs—from a research scientist to an elementary school teacher.

In the following interview, they described how First Mennonite Church in San Francisco, which has about 40 members, is a source of strength.



How is First Mennonite Church of San Francisco different from the congregations you were a part of as children?

Karen: The church I grew up in, First Mennonite in Bluffton [Ohio], was large. The roles were well-defined. If you were a Sunday school teacher, you were always a Sunday school teacher. I have great memories of that church and sometimes wish we were larger so we could have a children's choir, for example.

We are a smaller group, so we have to share responsibility for everything. We are constantly changing our roles. Often as we plan our worship services, our discussion moves beyond the logistics. People share why a song or a children's story is important to them. It binds us together.

I am a working mom and lead a very busy life. I wonder if I would be leading singing at a large church. Here I am. I like being involved. There is never a dull moment.

Dan: There is a night and day difference. For example, women are involved in every aspect of our congregation. It is hard to conceive of men and women as equally integrated in other churches I have experienced. I have noticed that as we talk to pastoral candidates, some of them ask us if women preach in our church. That's the wrong question for us.

Kenda: It is different to go back to my home church in Illinois and not see as many individuals involved in worship. Here I am asked to be involved in the church, to lead worship services. Everybody needs to be involved to make it work. At home, women are not used to their full potential.

John: Most of us have pretty well-established support groups outside of church that compete for our social time. Also, most people in the church put in at least 40 hours a week in their jobs. I grew up in Phoenix, where the church was the central focus. Here the overall structure is similar—we have potlucks, committees, voluntary service, quilting—but it feels like we have less time to squeeze it all in.

Dan: In terms of our attitude toward the Bible, we are at odds with some in the Mennonite church. But we have studied and measured our beliefs against our experiences. We are constantly testing them within our community. In a sense, we take responsibility for how we interpret the Scriptures. I find I am irritated and frustrated with people in the church who think faith is easy.

For many people, their involvement here comes after a time of not being a part of the Mennonite church. They made a conscious decision to come back. It may sound a bit schmaltzy, but we treasure our members.

Russ: The church I grew up in in Kansas emphasized the fact that we are sinners. Here we recognize the existence of sin, but our starting point is creation. We assume people can have different lifestyles and still be good people. Another way to explain it is to use the example of the traditional wedding vows. It would sound different if couples started their vows

"For many people, their involvement here comes after a time of not being a part of the Mennonite church. They made a conscious decision to come back."

Dan Flickinger

Karen Kreider Yoder

'Everyone is welcome': *John Flickinger and Kenda Reeser talk as they work on a quilt.*

with "I'm stuck with you" instead of "I love you."

Do you find that some Mennonites have misconceptions about the city?

Dan: There is a deep skepticism about whether churches can thrive in the city. Urban areas are often seen as mission outreach. Cities should be seen as the future of the church—more and more people my age are living there. We need to expose our church leaders to working, functioning urban congregations.

Russ: The city is seen as evil because there are so many opportunities to sin. The only reason to have a church in the city is to save people from sin. The church in the city is not a contradiction. It is not terrifying. There is so much vibrancy.

Karen: I feel San Francisco is a wonderful place to live and work. I see the city as a place where we can be nurtured. People here have such a wealth of experiences.

How does the church nurture you?

Russ: It gives me the ability to survive, whether that means going out for a movie with people from the church or crying on each other's shoulders. The church has given me a secure foundation to become the person I am because it is an open and accepting place. This is my family of choice.

Karen: People often are supportive in physical ways. Someone will know I am busy and offer to take care of the children. Once, at the end of the school year when I was extremely busy, two church members cleaned our kitchen before 12 houseguests were scheduled to arrive. For me, that was meaningful. I had allowed myself to be vulnerable by letting others see my inadequacies. It was like I had experienced a foot washing.

Kenda: I don't feel pressure to go back to school. I feel like it is OK that I am 24 years old and don't have a four-year degree. I feel like it is OK that I am a nanny and that I am single. In my home church, which has about 300 members, there are only four people who are close to my age who are not married.

Dan: There are not many Mennonite churches in North America that I would be interested in being a part of. There is a big enough gulf between my experiences and beliefs and what they expect. This church is a source of strength for me, not an obligation.

John: The church community serves to ground me and renew me. I can bring my experiences, thoughts and emotions and test them out in an environment I know and understand. For example, on Sunday mornings people often share their joys and concerns. This tends to be a powerful time. The nurturing comes because we feel we can test out all the things that happen in life in the context of the congregation.

How else would you describe First Mennonite Church?

Karen: This is a strong Mennonite community. The members here are great role models for our children about what it means to be active, committed Christians.

Kenda: I have a view of God that is all-loving. The church is a place where everyone is welcome no matter what. My purpose as a Christian is to show love to other people, not to judge or condemn. The church here fits my views.

Russ: People here are not ready to write a confession of faith. We see ourselves as on a journey. We tell stories and, through our stories, we find our commonalities. The church is a safe place to do the searching.

John: There is a creative energy and vitality here that I haven't felt in other congregations. In my past there was a strict, regimented approach that said certain experiences cannot occur because they are outside the confines of the community. Here it is assumed that everybody is good. We are healthy and whole. That allows us to deal honestly and openly with each other.

'I wanted to make a difference'

Drawn to Mennonites because of their work for justice, Sharon Heath serves Christ through a legal career.

Carla Reimer

She had a dollar in her pocket. As she sat down for a meal of macaroni at St. Anthony's soup kitchen, after waiting in line for two hours, it was as if a bucket of cold water had been thrown in her face, says Sharon Heath.

She was only 21 years old and was living in San Francisco for the first time through an urban studies program offered by her college. Together with two other students, Sharon spent two days and nights on the city streets as part of her semester-long class.

For Sharon it was more than education, it was a "life-changing experience. It was a real eye-opener. I was standing in line at the soup kitchen with drunks and welfare mothers. For many it was clearly their only meal of the day. I asked myself a lot of questions about the role of Christians in the face of urban poverty and crime."

These questions led her to accept a Mennonite Voluntary Service assignment four years later, even though at the time she didn't know a thing about Mennonites. "They weren't even a blip on the horizon," she says.

As a result of her mother's strong Christian beliefs, Sharon spent a lot of time attending various church activities while she was growing up in California. "My mother was very spiritual. She led me to the Lord. I was baptized when I was 9," she recalls, noting that she was raised in the Conservative Baptist Church.

But she also was influenced by the political events around her. "When I was in sixth grade, I started reading *Time* and listening to the radio. I remember Joan Baez singing, 'There but for Fortune go you and I.' The Vietnam War was on the news."

And, she says, her home congregation wasn't saying a word about any of it. "My church was preaching about sending out missionaries to reach the unsaved. Presbyterians and Methodists were considered liberals."

But though she had a great deal of "personal discomfort" with her church's views, she felt "rebellion wasn't an option," since she was the oldest child. "My father died when I was a freshman in high school. My younger brother was having difficulties," she says.

Sharon chose to attend a Christian college in Santa Barbara, Calif., because it was "a safe place to explore the questions I had about my faith." As a result of her class in San Francisco, she decided she "wanted to make a difference" in the world.

Soon after she graduated with a psychology degree in 1975, she began working with juvenile delinquents. "I didn't know what I was getting into. I did the best I could at that age. I was dealing with some very damaged kids," she says.

One year later she "burned out" and started working in office settings instead. While she was living in San Jose, Calif., a friend told Sharon she should apply to Mennonite Voluntary Service. By then she was familiar with Mennonites because she was reading *The Other Side*.

She applied and soon received a letter inviting her to serve as a community organizer with Denver Legal Aid in Golden, Colo. She accepted the assignment.

"When I went into voluntary service, I had no intention of becoming a Mennonite. I kind of resented the fact that I was expected to go to Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church," she says.

But one Sunday Sharon decided to stay for a congregational meeting, and she was "so impressed" that she decided she wanted to become a member. "I liked the way they listened to each other. Peace and justice were obviously important. I liked the way they walked the talk."

Sharon had already decided at an earlier time that she was a pacifist. "I thought, How can Christians, who are supposed to love their neighbors, put a bullet through someone's head?" Through her involvement at Arvada Mennonite Church, she decided to become a war tax resister by living below the taxable income level.

At the same time, Heath felt she needed to figure out what she wanted to do in terms of her career. She had observed the lawyers at Denver Legal Aid and thought it looked like a good

Russ Schmidt

> *“I see my job as my ministry. I do it in the name of Christ.”*
>
> **Sharon Heath**

career if you wanted to work for justice.

“I had always thought you had to be brilliant to be a lawyer. But I also thought, If those two men at legal aid can make it through law school, I can do it, too.” She was right. In 1984 she graduated with a law degree from the University of California in Davis.

Her timing couldn’t have been worse, however, as then President Reagan had just slashed funding for legal aid. “There were something like 100 new lawyers applying for four legal aid positions with salaries of $16,000 a year,” she says.

Heath decided to accept a job working with state prisoners for a salary of $18,000 a year. She reasoned that she still would be helping people who were at a disadvantage in society. “I never aspired to making lots of money by becoming a partner at a law firm,” she says.

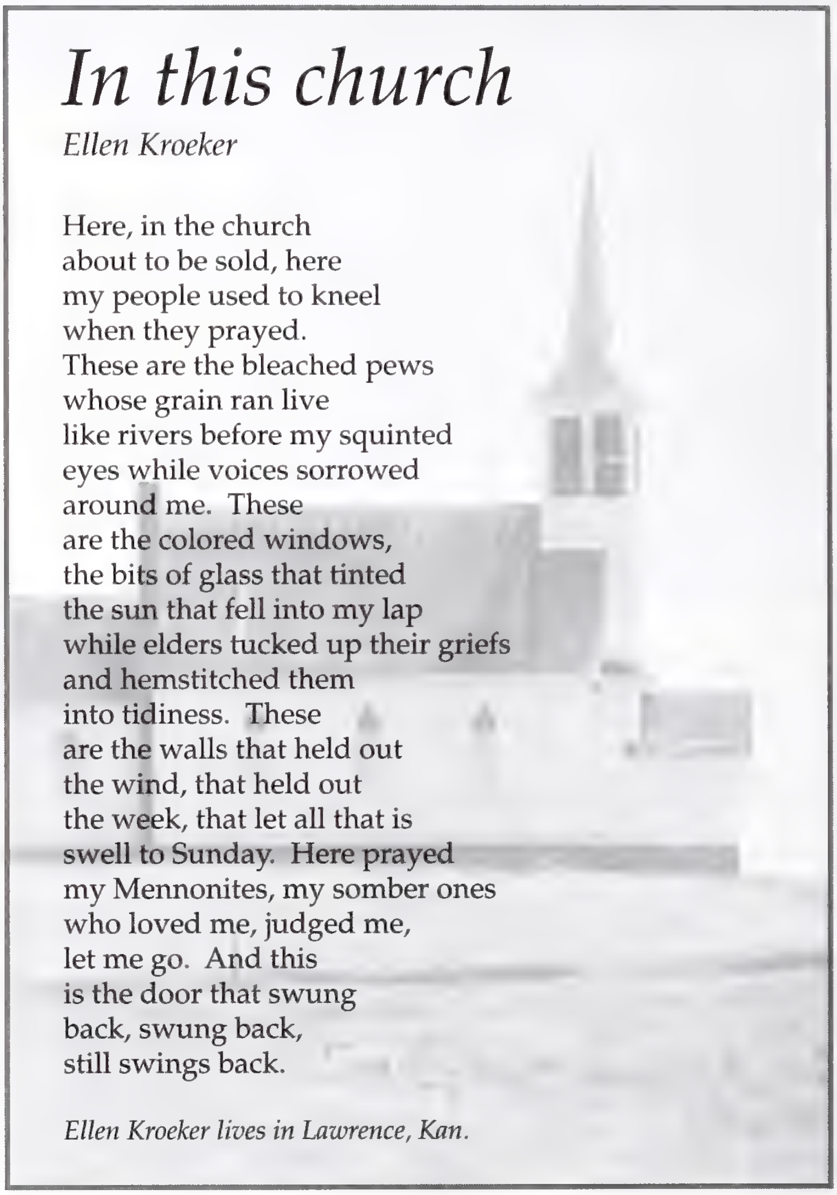
Today Sharon is as dedicated to the cause of justice as ever. She works to ensure that the rights of county jail prisoners are protected and provides them with basic legal information. “I see my job as my ministry. I do it in the name of Christ,” she says.

The support of people at First Mennonite Church in San Francisco is an essential part of her ability to continue at her work. “This church is different from all but a few churches,” Sharon says. “It is a place I can go and hear my understanding of the gospel affirmed.

“It is also a safe place to not have all the answers. The approach is not, This is what God says and that settles it. Here questions are demanded. That is key to what the church is all about.”

Her involvement at First Mennonite helps her stay focused on what the real issues are. “I think Jesus doesn’t offer answers for white, middle-class Christians like myself. I think Jesus offers questions,” she says. “It seems so self-evident. God has always been on the side of the poor. Throughout the Bible, God has always held those with power accountable.”

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.



RNS photo by Dan Rutledge

In this church

Ellen Kroeker

Here, in the church
about to be sold, here
my people used to kneel
when they prayed.
These are the bleached pews
whose grain ran live
like rivers before my squinted
eyes while voices sorrowed
around me. These
are the colored windows,
the bits of glass that tinted
the sun that fell into my lap
while elders tucked up their griefs
and hemstitched them
into tidiness. These
are the walls that held out
the wind, that held out
the week, that let all that is
swell to Sunday. Here prayed
my Mennonites, my somber ones
who loved me, judged me,
let me go. And this
is the door that swung
back, swung back,
still swings back.

Ellen Kroeker lives in Lawrence, Kan.

Letters

'DISOWNED' MAY BECOME OWNED

Quaker meetings "disowned" some early Quaker abolitionists—those who felt led to suggest that trading in or holding slaves, or benefiting from, or not speaking against slavery, might be a profound corruption of their Christian life, spirituality and witness. Later Quakers led the abolition movement with the support of their meetings. May the Lord of history so transform Mennonite "disownments" attributed to homosexuality or support thereof. *Leo J. Filon III, Seattle*

A THEOLOGY OF MONEY

September 1 begins an unprecedented look at money among the Mennonite community. The Conference of Mennonites in Canada, the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church and Mennonite Mutual Aid combined funds and personnel to begin a five-year project to develop an Anabaptist theology of money. As director of this project, I look forward to listening across the church to find out what we believe, what we currently practice and to set forth a challenge for Mennonites to build generosity into discipleship.

Preparations for this task are only beginning, but already a groundswell of interest is finding expression. I have been overwhelmed by the phone calls, letters, resources on Christians and their money, and expressions of interest and goodwill that have come my way. For some reason we are ready to reconsider what bearing Christianity has on our use of money.

The steering committee's vision for this project includes developing a theology of money for North American Mennonites that is understandable in lay language. We intend to measure the project's success by developing greater generosity among Mennonites toward building God's kingdom. We wish to see a public acknowledgment among Mennonites that giving is a form of worship. We also wish to see among Mennonites a wider use of money management tools produced to serve members at various economic levels.

By the way, this project needs a compelling name. The working title is "The Long-Term Stewardship Cultivation Project," which we acknowledge is too long. Any suggestions? *Mark Vincent, Sturgis, Mich.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Ceilandia, Brazil—Having relaxed and had time to reflect over the last year, I found myself burdened by a sense of unbalance in my life. In the past five months I had found little "me" time, and too little energy for my girls. How to reorganize our schedule? I realized I needed to cut back, not just reorganize. This has been difficult for me, as it has meant cutting back on teaching commitments I enjoyed and that gave me communion with a variety of people from church. However, my girls are growing up quickly, and there will always be classes that need teaching. I feel relieved to have more time at home, even though I do not feel my decision will be understood by everyone. Please pray for wisdom and understanding as I try to balance family and ministry.

Last night at midnight I was awoken by lovely singing, a stark contrast to the usual noise, yelling and dogs barking that we usually hear late at night. I listened for a minute to confirm that we were being serenaded by nearly 20 youth from the church. They do this once or twice a year, cramming into two cars and driving around to certain families to serenade them in the wee hours of the morning. We had received this blessing last year to welcome us here, and this time I think it was because of my illness [hepatitis]. It was quite an honor to stand there in a dressing gown and listen to lovely choruses being sung simply for our enjoyment and to encourage us in our ministry. They told us we are well loved and appreciated, prayed for my health, and quietly moved on. *Janet Plenert*

Berlin, Germany—We were thrilled 30 long (yet short) years ago when our name appeared next to the Hoffnungsau Church (Inman, Kan.) mailbox in rural Kansas. Our joy was the privilege of serving the Lord among people who became our first love in pastoral ministry. Our ministry and family have since floundered through the Red Sea, the desert, Jordan River crossings, Sea of Galilee storms and "Mary and Martha" loving-kindness.

The Sept. 27, 1994, issue of *The Mennonite* amplifying on "The Challenges of Pastoral Ministry" elicits a "me, too" admission of painful memories in our most recent pastoral life. Jonah 2 was relevant reading in our time of crisis and defeat. Slowly and lovingly God is restoring to us the joy of our salvation—in Germany.

We'd love to hear from anyone who wants to know what we're up to. Write us at Kadettenweg 40, 12205 Berlin, Germany. *Dietrich and Dorothy Rempel*

Cuauhtemoc, Mexico—Many here are experiencing difficult times caused by poor crops, drought, the devaluation of the peso and high interest rates. Many are looking for alternatives either to move to Canada or the United States, to grow different crops or to start new businesses. Some estimate that about 15 percent of the Mennonites in some of the colonies here are planning to move away. It is evident that there will be many changes in the near future. Some Christian businessmen here ask, "What is God's will for me at this time? How can we follow Christ when times are so difficult?"

There are hopeful signs as well. Three ministers took some courses at the Bible school this winter. We see some students with leadership abilities. Group Bible studies in homes will be starting soon. The businessmen's monthly breakfast meetings are helping them think of the well-being of the community, not just their own needs. *Hanna and Abe Rempel*

Speaking out

Not a 'good war'

We should mourn, not celebrate the victory of violence in World War II.

Ted Grimsrud

In the past year the media have been full of remembrances and celebrations of the end of World War II, by common consensus the last "good war." Part of the consensus, it appears, is the assumption that World War II "worked," that its violence was redemptive.

Like many Mennonites, I am a committed pacifist. I believe war is always wrong. But also, like many Mennonites, I have been brought up to be glad about World War II. These two beliefs create a tension. How can a pacifist be glad about a war? But I am no longer glad about World War II. It did *not* work, if by work we mean contribute to human well-being.

World War II is generally seen as a justifiable war, given the obvious evils of Nazism. However, this assumption masks some ambiguities. For one thing, the treatment of Germany after World War I was punitive and vindictive and helped create the spawning ground for Nazism. A more just treatment of Germany (advocated, by the way, by many pacifists and progressives) in the 1920s would have probably kept Nazism from spreading as it did. As the Nazis rose in power, they were treated with kid gloves by many Allied leaders.

For example, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain has been vilified for his policy of appeasement of Hitler. But what is often forgotten is that Chamberlain was a right-wing Tory who was sympathetic with Nazism because it was seen as a helpful bulwark against the "Red Threat." Again, the most outspoken opponents of Nazism in the early 1930s tended to be pacifists and progressives.

The Allies were hostile to Democratic Socialists in Germany from 1918 until Hitler took over and rendered the Socialists and Communists obsolete. Perhaps the immediate rationale for the war in 1939 (to stop the Nazis, who were out of control) was justifiable, but only because the Allies had been irresponsible earlier.

The justification of saving the Jews was not one that shaped the Allied entry into the war. In fact, all the Allied nations refused to do much of anything to save the Jews when they had the opportunity before the war—including refusing entry to shiploads of Jews seeking asylum.

Just conduct: As to whether the conduct of the war was just, only die-hard supporters of the just-war approach argue that it was. Reading Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse Five* disabused me of that belief even before I was a pacifist. The Allies self-consciously broke almost every rule of just conduct, most blatantly the rules against intentionally destroying civilian life (again, read Vonnegut's account of the bombing of Dresden) and against fighting longer than necessary (the insistence upon unconditional surrender after the war was for all intents and purposes won no doubt cost millions of lives).

> **Those who refused to add to the spiral of total brute force kept a flicker of light alive.**

Who won World War II? Was Nazism defeated? *Violence* won World War II. It is true that some particular Nazi leaders were defeated. Nazism as an explicit form of government was (for the time being) eradicated. But in many ways the spirit of Nazism was victorious. The German arms builders (the I.G. Farben conglomerate) came through the war unscathed and continue to prosper today. The German scientists who sold their souls to the Nazis were then recruited to sell their souls to the Allied nuclear idols.

One of the main tenets of Nazism, rule by brute power, has been since World War II the defining principle for U.S. foreign policy and most other political systems in the world. I don't mean to say that this wasn't the case before, but fighting Nazi brute power with Allied brute power accelerated the reign of brute power. In the course of history, that will be far more significant than whatever direct effect on the world Hitler might have had.

Life is too ambiguous to paint the World War II experience as black and white. My father was an officer during that war and served five years with distinction. He remained proud of that service to his dying day. He was a gentle, loving person. Nonetheless, I am aware of irretrievable losses even he experienced.

For the loved ones of the millions upon millions of people who were killed in that war the irretrievable losses were much more immediate. When we consider World War II we rarely think of the incredible loss to the world this unleashed violence caused. We don't know what the Nazis would have done if not opposed militarily. I can't imagine that they would possibly have killed even a fraction of as many people as the war did. And I'm confident the Nazi system would have collapsed under its own weight at least as quickly as communism.

I wrote my doctoral dissertation on World War II conscientious objectors. Their experience, for our society only a tiny footnote in the war experience, was also full of ambiguity. But that witness was an important aspect of what happened during the war.

That tiny group of pacifists (in the United States there were 12,000 COs who performed alternative service and 6,000 who went to prison) may have performed a service analogous to the prophet who wrote Isaiah 40-55. That prophet, writing in the chaos of brute force following Babylon's destruction of Jerusalem, kept a flicker of light alive with his vision of God's peace still having the final say. Those who refused to add to the spiral of total brute force (even if "justifiable" because the Nazis were so evil) kept a similar flicker of light alive and served a crucial service of keeping violence from totally dominating the world.

Ted Grimsrud is co-pastor at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Milk, meat and bubblegum

A parable of diet: you are what you eat.

Bill D. Hallsted

“Edgar is 47.” I must have looked ridiculous, standing with my mouth agape. I closed it, swallowed, then responded, “47?”

He nodded, looking at the robust baby contentedly taking his bottle. “Turned 47 last week, as a matter of fact.”

“How can he be 47 years old? He’s a baby!”

My guide nodded. “It’s the diet. Edgar just likes infant formula, so he stays that age by eating nothing else.”

My confusion was obvious. “I didn’t think that was possible. I thought he’d die if he did that.”

The guide sighed. “He is dead, in many ways. He has refused to grow up, so he can’t accomplish anything. He just has to be cared for.”

I had a flurry of questions, but the guide moved on. I followed through a series of scenes. He showed me people at various ages, pretty much normal. The guide seemed obsessed with what each group was eating.

One group wasn’t eating at all. They were terribly busy, doing all sorts of things. The guide explained they wanted so badly to accomplish, they simply didn’t take time to eat. It was evident they weren’t enjoying their labors. They looked exhausted, weak, and were suffering obvious pain, but they labored on feverishly.

I finally understood what he was showing me. “Do you mean each group decides how mature it wants to be by what it chooses to eat?”

“That’s right,” he said. “Some foods are pretty acidic. Those who eat exclusively those foods tend to become as caustic as their diet. Others eat only soft sweets and become mushy and shallow. Others enjoy eating only tough foods and become hard. Those who choose a well-balanced diet are those who develop into mature, strong people, capable of accomplishing.”

I watched, fascinated. The idea they could so easily become what they chose to eat was difficult to accept. Then we came to that other group.

“I call these the gum balls.” There was a hard edge in his voice.

“Why do you call them that?”

“Because that’s all they’ll eat.”

“What? Gum balls?”

“Gum. The same bite, over and over. See that man over there? He’s been chewing the same bite for 31 years.”

His body was shriveled and twisted from lack of nourishment. Only his jaws looked healthy, and they fairly bulged with muscle. He looked, honestly, like he could bite a nail in two. I forced my own jaw closed again. “Thirty-one years? The same bite?”

There was a grim set to the guide’s lips as he nodded. “It was the first of his new diet he bit into. He liked it so well he has refused to move on to the next bite. He’s just been chewing that same bite ever since.”

> **“It was the first of his new diet he bit into. He liked it so well he has refused to move on to the next bite. He’s just been chewing that same bite ever since.”**

I realized these were not the bodies of people but their souls. Only in the spiritual realm are we able to choose our level of maturity and development by the diet we select.

Some want simple, shallow things, entertaining and easy to understand. They find the milk of God’s Word pleasing and soothing. Afraid to try digesting more difficult truths of Christianity, they stay forever at the level of elementary teachings.

Others find certain elements of God’s Word to fit well with their personal penchants, so they glean the Word carefully for those things. Anything that discloses other truths is brushed aside. Only those things that fit a narrow taste are sought and studied. If they ever deal with the rest of God’s Word, it is to try to fit it into the dietary mold of that one narrow concept.

Some find nourishment in the whole range of God’s limitless Word. They feast thoughtfully on every course, developing appreciation for each truth as it unfolds. They mature accordingly. It is they who become the warriors, the workers, the able servants, the leaders upon whom the progress of the church depends.

Then there are the gum balls. They latch on to a single teaching, or sometimes a pack of teachings. It may be from the Word or from their traditions. They chew it until it has little resemblance to what it started as, in total disregard of every other teaching, every other truth, every need of the church. They really aren’t good for much. They don’t usually serve anywhere, or teach, or lead. They just chew their bite of gum and growl.

It is true, spiritually speaking, that you are what you eat. Are you grazing gleefully on the great gamut of God’s Word? Are you present and learning whenever God’s Word is studied? Are you avid to advance into new avenues of understanding? Are you carefully balancing your intake of milk and solid food?

God’s Word says, “Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil” (Hebrews 5:13-14 NIV).

Dig in folks! Find a time to read from God’s Word every day. Get involved in a Bible study. Attend Sunday school faithfully. Take notes during the sermon. Test what the preacher says by God’s Word. There’s a scrumptious spiritual smorgasbord waiting for you in God’s Word. You will become what you ingest. Don’t pass up a single morsel.

Bill D. Hallsted lives in Griffith, Ind.

From rural life to the inner city

Terry and Gladys Terichow want to serve the poor.

John Longhurst

Life was going well for Terry and Gladys Terichow of Morden, Man. The last of their four children was almost out of the house. They liked their jobs and were just entering the high-income years.

All the rewards of a life of hard work were about to pay off. Then they quit their jobs, sold their house and moved to Winnipeg's inner city and became volunteers with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

For Terry, 48, and Gladys, 47, the decision to "give it all up" began 10 years ago when they were in their mid-30s.

"We realized then that it wouldn't be long until all the kids were out of the house and we would have more time on our hands," says Terry, who was working as the loans manager at Morden Credit Union. "We asked ourselves, What do we want to do with the rest of our lives?"

The answer, they decided, was not just something different, but "something that would make a difference."

At the same time they felt frustrated that their lives "really weren't modeling the life of Christ," says Gladys, who was working as a free-lance journalist and correspondent for provincial and national farm publications, local community newspapers and for the *Winnipeg Free Press.*

Something just wasn't right: "We realized that Jesus wasn't concerned about the size of our house or the make of our car but rather about what we were doing for others," she adds. "We sensed that something just wasn't right in our lives."

For the Terichows the answer was leaving their jobs, house and community to serve with MCC. Today they live in a rented house in Winnipeg's inner city.

Terry is the assistant manager at Winnipeg Harvest, which collects and distributes food for 125 social service agencies in the city, while Gladys works with the MCC Canada Communications and Education program.

Part of her work finds her helping inner-city development agencies with their communication and promotional needs.

"It wasn't an easy thing to do," says Terry. "I had a good future at the credit union. It was hard to sell our house and a lot of our possessions."

John Longhurst

'Step out in faith': *Terry and Gladys Terichow*

Adds Gladys, "When we left Morden, I felt I was giving up everything. All I could think about was leaving our house and our apple trees. But I kept thinking, Should we let things stop us from following Christ?"

Some of their friends didn't understand why they were "doing the opposite of what people at our stage of life were supposed to be doing," says Terry. But others supported them.

They especially appreciated the support they received from people in their home congregation, the Morden Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference Church.

Through their work the Terichows have come to learn that "you don't need to go overseas to find people with needs—needy people are right here at home," says Terry.

Many live in poverty: They have also learned that while some people are poor because they make bad choices, many live in poverty through no fault of their own.

"We used to believe that people were poor because they lacked ambition or didn't work hard enough," Terry says. "But try telling that to the quadriplegic man who volunteers at the Winnipeg Harvest for four hours every day. He doesn't want to receive government assistance, but a car accident left him paralyzed."

Her work with MCC has given Gladys an opportunity to realize one of her goals—to help Mexican Mennonites. Living in southern Manitoba, she became familiar with the many challenges they face adapting to life in Canada.

One of her first projects at MCC Canada is to help produce a video about Mexican Mennonites. She would have grown up in Mexico herself if her grandparents had decided to leave Manitoba in the 1920s.

To people in their 30s, still raising families but thinking about future service, the Terichows say, "Begin planning now" by putting money away for retirement. They realize that it's hard to know when you have enough savings to afford to leave a job.

"You just have to step out in faith," Gladys says.

With all the uncertainty about the future of Canadian government pension plans, who knows how much people will need?

"There are two ways to approach future security," says Gladys. "One way is to try to earn as much as you can in the hope it will be enough. The other way is to learn to live poorer.

"Now we're doing the second."

John Longhurst works in Winnipeg with MCC Canada Communications.

EDC will refuse credentials over sexual issues

Quakertown, Pa. (GCMC)—Eastern District Conference (EDC) delegates passed a human sexuality statement that would deny leadership credentials to people who advocate or practice homosexual, premarital or extramarital sexual conduct. The statement passed by a vote of 158 to 61 at spring sessions at West Swamp Mennonite Church May 5-6.

EDC president George Prichard had hoped to limit the open discussion of the statement to 15 minutes. Instead the sometimes heated debate took up much of the May 6 afternoon agenda as people proposed a number of substitute motions and amendments. A ballot or roll-call vote followed each suggested change.

The EDC human sexuality statement is similar to the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) 1986 statement on human sexuality in that it clearly states that premarital, extramarital and homosexual sexual activity is sin.

However, the following lines referring to leadership credentials differ from the GC statement: "We believe teachings that view premarital, extramarital and homosexual sexual activity as acceptable conduct are incompatible with Christ's standards for his servants in the church. Therefore, we cannot grant leadership credentials to, or continue to recognize the leadership credentials of, persons who continue to advocate or practice such conduct contrary to the Scriptures."

David Bartow, pastor at Upper Milford Mennonite Church, Zionsville, Pa., was the first delegate to speak up. "It is wrong to seek fellowship through a policy statement. Instead, I propose that EDC form a special study group to see how other congregations are dealing with the issue of sexuality and then bring it for a vote."

But Allan Sones, a pastor at East Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., countered that he was not in favor of "avoiding" the issue any longer. The statement had been discussed at the April 1994 EDC delegate sessions and at a special meeting in September 1994. Bartow's substitute motion was defeated 139 to 68.

Joseph Kotva, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pa., then proposed that the statement be approved only if 75 percent, instead of a simple majority, voted in its favor. He pointed out that the statement begins with the words "for the preservation of the fellowship."

"If we start with this purpose, this statement needs to carry a large vote. If it claims to speak for all of us and that the Bible is clear about what it says, again we need to have a 75 percent vote," he said. His proposal was defeated 148 to 89.

'It is wrong to seek fellowship through a policy statement.'

David Bartow

Joseph Miller, pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., asked that the lines about the withdrawal of leadership credentials be deleted from the statement.

However, Robert Gerhart, pastor at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa., and member of the ministerial committee that drafted the statement, argued that those lines provided a necessary safeguard for EDC.

Others agreed with Gerhart. "We're not talking about man's law, we're talking about God's law. The Lord has already passed judgment on this. If we're not careful we will end up like the Israelites," warned Maudesta Clariborne, evangelist at Second Mennonite Church, Philadelphia.

"This is not intended to be a witch hunt. If we take these lines out, we will have gutted the entire document," said Carlton Minnis, recently retired pastor at Second Mennonite Church.

Kotva responded that he was angry about the tone of the debate. "As much I love you folks, I resent the fact that you say we are not taking the Bible seriously. I have questions about

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Taiwanese and U.S. leaders help sort troubles of Argentine church / p. 18

What do we make of McNamara's regret for Vietnam? / p. 19

Tight security at Oklahoma City's federal building ruled out Mennonite Disaster Service assistance in clean-up following the April 19 bomb attack. But MDS' Oklahoma unit organized local volunteers who helped serve meals for rescue workers and for people affected by the bombing. MDS volunteers also helped move belongings of elderly people who lived in nearby high-rise apartments that were no longer structurally safe. MDS is exploring ways to assist clean-up efforts of nearby small-business owners.

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Inmates at California State Prison—Solano County contributed more than $1,000 to the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) based in Clovis, Calif., March 21. The inmates are part of a group inside the prison called Victim Offender Reconciliation Group that works at understanding the impact of crime on victims and their families. The group invites victims' groups to bring in victims (not those of these inmates) to share the impact crime had on their lives. VORP director Ron Claassen, a member of Peace Community Church—Mennonite in Clovis, has visited and worked with the group since 1987.

A Mennonite Church area conference has placed a congregation, also affiliated with the General Conference, on what amounts to probation status. The Franconia Conference April 22 demoted Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, to associate membership and gave it two years to end its acceptance of homosexual practice or face the possibility of expulsion. The Illinois Mennonite Conference of the Mennonite Church took similar action against two congregations (also affiliated with the General Conference) in April: Oak Park (Ill.) Mennonite Church and Maple Avenue Mennonite Church, Waukesha, Wis. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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People who want to support the Lubicon Cree during their negotiations with the Canadian government beginning this month can join an international "Chain of Prayer." The chain was prompted by Mennonite Central Committee volunteer Elaine Bishop, who serves at the Lubicon community of Little Buffalo, Alta. "Prayer is important to many people here," says Bishop. The cost of joining the chain is $10 (Cdn.)/$7 (U.S.). Participants will receive regular updates on the negotiations. Checks should be sent to MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9. Although the Lubicon Cree have never ceded their territory to the Canadian or Alberta governments, both governments have allowed foreign and Canadian companies to exploit oil, natural gas and timber on the land. An estimated $7 to $8 billion (Cdn.) of resources has been taken off this land. "Until 1980 the Lubicon were basically self-sufficient," Bishop says. "In the span of 15 years they have seen their economic base shattered." Today they are dependent on welfare. During the negotiations, the Lubicon will ask for a reserve of 95 square miles (246 square kilometers), smaller than their traditional territory of 4,000 square miles (10,350 square kilometers). They are also asking for $100 million in compensation.

this statement compared with the General Conference statement, which says we have to remain in dialogue," he said. "You listen to me preach, you come to see the way I live. You tell me I don't take the Bible seriously!"

"I thank Joe [Kotva] for saying what many of us are afraid to say. My husband and I joined the Mennonite church because it followed God's laws, not man's laws," said Judy Gausch, Upper Milford Mennonite Church. "This document not only will divide the conference, it also will drive new believers away. My Bible teaches me to not only accept all people, but to love them."

Steve Raynes, Hereford Mennonite Church, countered that the church can name the sin and still love the sinner. The motion to delete the lines about the leadership credentials was defeated 149 to 39.

The vote on the original wording of the statement passed 158 to 61 (72 percent). One church abstained from voting; delegates from three churches were not in agreement on the issue.

Appreciation: In other action, Carlton Minnis received a plaque in recognition of 23 years of service as pastor at Second Mennonite Church. Minnis remembered his first experience in a Mennonite church. At that time, Minnis thought he wasn't preaching hard enough because the people in the pews were so quiet. He recalled how he kept on cranking up the volume, but that didn't help.

By the end of the sermon, Minnis wished "the floor would open up and swallow me." But later, as the members filed by to shake hands with Minnis, many of them said, God bless you. "I then realized that they had been paying attention," he said.

The ministerial committee also presented a piece of artwork to the family of the late David Hillegas, who had served as EDC conference minister since 1983. He was planning to retire May 1.

Albert H. Epp, who is currently serving as interim pastor at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb., spoke on "The Vaporizing of the Anabaptist Vision" and "The Dream that Moves and Motivates." Epp is president of Stairway Discipleship Inc. of Henderson, Neb.

EDC delegates approved a $213,500 budget for May 1995-April 1996 fiscal year. The last fiscal budget was $205,300.

They also elected George Prichard, pastor of Lower Skippack Mennonite Church, Skippack, Pa., as president and John Kulp, pastor of Saucon Mennonite Church, Coopersburg, Pa., as vice president. *Carla Reimer*

Mennonites in Zaire face Ebola outbreak

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/AIMM)—Mennonites in Zaire are struggling to respond to the outbreak of the Ebola virus in Kikwit, Zaire. The virus is said to have killed 77 people as of May 16 and is said to have spread from this city of about 600,000 to other parts of Zaire.

Marilyn Derksen in a May 11 fax wrote that all the schools in Kikwit have been closed as well as all medical facilities, with the exception of one hospital. "In a culture where visiting the sick is extremely important and with the total lack of infrastructure in this country, containment may be an impossible task," she said. Derksen and her husband, Rick, are General Conference missionaries based in Kinshasa, Zaire's capital city.

Kikwit is home to at least four churches belonging to the approximately 50,000-member Zaire Mennonite Church (CMZ). It is also the headquarters of the Mennonite Brethren Conference in Zaire, with approximately 70,000 members.

There have been no reports to date that Mennonites are among those dead as a result of the virus in Kikwit, although a doctor who died of the virus had formerly been a member of the Mennonite Brethren.

When Derksen's husband, Rick, returned to Kinshasa May 3 from meetings in Kikwit, he noted that it was general knowledge among the residents there that a number of people were ill and many had died from bacillary dysentery.

By May 5, Derksen wrote, they heard for the first time that some of the deaths might be linked instead to the Ebola virus.

Dr. Pakisa Tshimika, director of health and development for the Zaire Mennonite Brethren Church, in a May 17 interview said the "ground was prepared" for this kind of disaster with the social, political and economic

Zaire River
ZAIRE
Kasai River
Kinshasa
Kikwit

neglect of the area. He said most humanitarian aid to Zaire goes to other parts of the country, and asked, "Are [aid organizations] giving a message that you have to create problems in order to receive assistance?" He described unsanitary medical practices forced by necessity: patching surgical gloves and reusing needles.

Tshimika is working with Mennonite Central Committee and others to help organize aid to combat the outbreak. MCC has six workers in Zaire, none based in Kikwit. To date, MCC has not drawn up any specific assistance plans. International agencies, such as the World Health Organization, have begun supplying syringes, needles, gloves and other supplies to health facilities in and around Kikwit.

The Ebola virus, which caused 274 deaths in Zaire in 1976, has an 80 to 90 percent mortality rate. It has a two- to 14-day incubation period before symptoms appear. The symptoms include fever, diarrhea, vomiting and massive hemorrhaging.

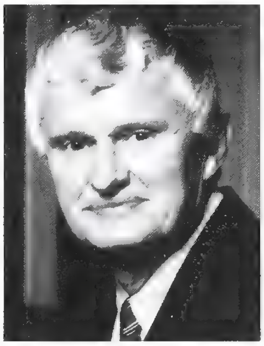
Derksen observed, "We are once again witnessing the strong faith in God that people have. Please convey the CMZ's appreciation for people's concerns and prayers. God is upholding all of us."

Bluffton College president to step down next year

Elmer Neufeld will step down as president of Bluffton (Ohio) College at the end of the 1995-96 academic year. Neufeld will have completed 31 years of service at the college, including 18 as president.

Over the past seven years under Neufeld's tenure, enrollment at Bluffton has increased by more than 50 percent to a record high of 899 last fall. Endowments have increased by $4.6 million.

Neufeld came to Bluffton as assistant professor of philosophy in fall 1965. He advanced to associate professor and taught full time until August 1974, when he became dean of academic affairs. From that position he assumed the presidency.


Neufeld

Neufeld brought a strong background in peace work to the college. Prior to coming to Bluffton, his professional experience included civilian public service in Colorado, Montana and Wisconsin; service as associate secretary of the National Service Board for Religious Objectors in Washington, working with the interracial Woodlawn Mennonite Church in Chicago, serving as executive secretary of the peace section for Mennonite Central Committee, being MCC program director in Zaire and peace missionary in sub-Sahara Africa. He served as president of the General Conference from 1974 to 1980.

The Bluffton board of trustees has appointed a committee to search for a replacement. That committee consists of representatives of the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Central and Eastern districts of the General Conference, the Bluffton community, the Bluffton College board and faculty, students and alumni of the college.

Trustees board chair Ed Diller said of Neufeld, "During his tenure as president, Elmer has demonstrated wise leadership of the college and faithful stewardship of its resources. But perhaps most importantly, Elmer has had a clear understanding of the mission of Bluffton College and the fundamental relationship between the broader Mennonite/Anabaptist church and the college. We are indeed fortunate to have had his leadership during these past 17 years."

Bluffton (Ohio) College closed applications months earlier this year due to lack of space. The application cut-off was May 31. Last year's date was Aug. 15. "The reason, quite simply, is that we're running out of housing space," says Mike Hieronimus, dean of admissions. Bluffton opened a new residence facility last September that houses 111 students. But because another record freshman class is expected, the college will establish a waiting list after May 31.

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Members of accountability groups working through cases of pastoral sexual misconduct met at Amigo Center near Sturgis, Mich., April 21-22. The group identified four necessities for acountability work: complete information about the offenses, clarity of purpose from bodies that appoint accountability groups, clear performance expectations for an offender and a member of the acountability group that has equal standing with and the respect of the offender.

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Victim offender reconciliation programs can make a difference. The Newton (Kan.) Offender Victim Ministries newsletter tells of Susan (not her real name), who a judge ordered to repay two small store owners for bad checks she had written. For two years Susan found excuses not to pay. Through VORP, the store owners met Susan and listened sympathetically to her story. They told her they would agree to a small monthly payment and that if that payment meant the difference between them and food or medication for her children, Susan should let them know. Susan was so impressed by their kindness that she rode her bike six miles to town to make her first payment to them.

Participants in the Living In Faithful Evangelism program gathered at Salem Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio, March 18. One hundred fifty-two people from 33 churches in Ohio and western Pennsylvania told of new initiatives in their churches, such as latchkey programs, new small groups, and a victim offender reconciliation program.

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Self-Help Crafts Canada hopes to increase its sales by $5 million (Cdn.), to $9.9 million, by the year 2000. Retail sales in Canada in 1994-95 were $4 million. "$9 million is quite a leap," acknowledges SHCC board chair Ted Rempel. "But with new markets, additional sales and two or three new stores in large urban areas like Toronto or Montreal, we think it is possible. In Asia, Africa and Latin America, groups are asking us to place larger orders so more people can have work," he says, adding that what SHCC really wants to do is "increase our purchases from $968,000 to $2 million by the year 2000."

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A $300,000 grant will help Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary professor Wilbert R. Shenk develop a new sub-area of mission studies. The grant from Pew Charitable Trusts will help Shenk assemble an international team of scholars to rethink the role of the church in modern culture. They will work to "separate the kernel of the gospel from the chaff of culture," says an AMBS release. The project is a spin-off of Shenk's work with the Gospel and Our Culture project, begun by the British Council of Churches. That project asked church organizations about the existence of programs to prepare people "with a clear mission priority in terms of their own society." The grant will follow Shenk to Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., where he will join the faculty in September.

Kobe relief derailed by setbacks

Lowell Detweiler (MDS)

Displaced: *This woman stays at a temporary shelter in Kobe, Japan, her bedroll occupying most of her allotted space on the classroom floor. Thousands of people still live in tents, classrooms and hastily constructed temporary housing, and may remain in crowded conditions for months.*

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Difficulties in organizing relief work in Kobe, Japan, have caused Japanese Mennonites to end official relief efforts following the Jan. 17 earthquake in Kobe.

Lowell Detweiler, Mennonite Disaster Service executive coordinator, spent April 4-13 in Japan consulting with Japanese Mennonite churches on their relief aid and possibilities for future disaster response efforts.

Detweiler reports that Japanese Mennonites faced considerable hurdles in their relief attempts. In addition to the overwhelming immensity of the destruction, the Japanese government does not recognize a role for volunteer groups in relief work and was reluctant to encourage international volunteer participation.

"Three months after the quake, much clean-up remains to be done but, like the rebuilding, it will be done by the government. Volunteers—mostly students on school breaks—will work at emergency and social service needs," Detweiler says.

"With the obstacles facing them, Japanese Mennonites officially ended their Kobe efforts in late April, although local churches continue to look for ongoing ways to work and witness," he adds.

Following the January quake, the Japanese Mennonite Emergency Relief Committee coordinated the efforts of volunteers from several Mennonite churches who helped out wherever they could. The Mennonite Brethren church in nearby Amagasaki City set up a feeding center in a park for several weeks. The Baba-cho (General Conference) Church building in Kobe, despite receiving significant damage itself, served as headquarters for the Mennonite volunteer response.

Kazuo Akamatsu, an MCC International Visitor Exchange Program participant who had returned to his native Japan following the quake in order to assist with relief efforts, returned to the United States April 26. He is spending the remainder of his IVEP experience in Goshen, Ind., working at a sheltered workshop for people with developmental disabilities.

Bangladeshis extort funds from MCC

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Two recently terminated MCC Bangladesh local employees extorted some $55,000 Cdn./$40,000 U.S. from MCC Bangladesh in two separate incidents in late March.

The two were terminated from MCC following a poor evaluation of their work and returned the next day, extorting money by threatening the life of Derek D'Silva, a Bangladeshi serving as interim MCC country co-representative. The two returned the next day, demanding more money. Their whereabouts are unknown.

Ed Martin, secretary for Central and Southern Asia, traveled to Bangladesh directly after the incidents and was in Bangladesh again in May for further follow-up. MCC Bangladesh is cooperating with Bangladeshi authorities to recover the money.

MCC Canada, government see differently

Winnipeg (MCCC)—For Mennonite Central Committee, building relationships between North American Christians and Christians in the developing world is a key element of its approach to relief and development.

For the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the government agency which funds overseas development work, the presence of North Americans overseas represents a lack of confidence in local people. In their minds, it reveals an inability to trust local people and a desire to control development.

That, in a nutshell, is one of the basic reasons why MCC Canada received a cut of over $500,000 from CIDA in March.

"When you get a cut that big, it usually means CIDA is trying to send you a message," says MCC Canada executive director Marvin Frey. "The message is that they don't think we are doing enough to 'build local capacity' —that is, to help local groups become strong and independent.

"We think we are. It's a classic case of misunderstanding."

CIDA's cut was based on its assessment of MCC Canada. The agency was ranked high in development education in Canada and having a supportive constituency, but low in building up local groups, Canadian control over CIDA funds and in gender equality on its board.

"Low marks in some aspects of the performance assessment don't mean an agency isn't fulfilling its goals," says Frey. "Rather, it's CIDA's way of measuring how well an agency's goals coincide with CIDA's goals."

Frey dismisses the notion that MCC does not build up local groups. "The cornerstone of our approach is working with local partners. We try not to begin a program if we can't find a local group to relate to and work with. But where we differ with CIDA is in wanting to place North Americans alongside local people. ... We think this is what it means to be a global church."

As for CIDA's critique about control over funding, Frey says this is also based on misunderstanding. "We try to make decisions about funding as a church, not as Canadians or Americans," he says, adding that "we've tended to put a higher priority on getting the job done than whether the decisions about money are made in the U.S. or Canada."

Lack of women: Regarding the lack of women on the board, Frey says it's true. "We don't have enough women on our board," he says, noting that only eight of 35 are women. "But we have no say over who the conferences and provincial MCC organizations send to our board."

One area where MCC Canada has made progress is in the number of program and management staff who are women. Ten years ago only two were in program and management positions; today nine of 16 are women.

Since getting its first grant of $25,000 from the Canadian government in 1970, MCC Canada has received over $122 million in block and project funding and in the form of matching grants through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank for relief and development work around the world. *John Longhurst*

MCC rethinks relationship to churches

Winnipeg (MCC)—Mennonite Central Committee's executive committee discussed tailoring MCC's work to North American churches' desires and discussed MCC's relationships to mission organizations at meetings April 21-22.

In response to North American requests for more short-term, hands-on involvements, MCC asked two long-time MCC workers, Tim Lind and Waldo Neufeld, to query congregations about their vision for service,

U.S. child poverty reached its highest level in 30 years during 1994, with one in four youngsters living below the poverty line. The Children's Defense Fund, a children's advocacy group, reported the finding March 28. The Washington-based group reported that one in three children can expect to fall below the poverty line at some time before age 16. (*Christian Century*)

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At an April 26-30 meeting in Hesston, Kan., the Youth Ministry Council for the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) passed a statement that encourages "our denominations to continue to grow in unity" and calls for "the integration of ... youth ministry ... as soon as possible after Wichita '95." MC/GC delegates will vote on whether to integrate the two denominations at Wichita '95 in July. The youth ministers also expressed concern about the development of two separate youth curricula by the MC and GC publishers. "It feels like a waste of resources. Instead of pooling ... we now have a competition," said Charlene Schrag, Pacific Northwest Conference youth minister.

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The Higher Education Council conducted a review of the relationship between the General Conference Mennonite Church and Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., April 26-29. In the course of the review, eight church leaders spent about 30 hours talking with students, faculty, staff, administration, trustees and Western District Conference representatives. In outlining its preliminary findings, the team agreed that "Bethel College is very closely related to its church constituency. The relationship is an unspoken assumption in almost every area." The team was especially impressed with the students' strong affirmation of the faculty and academic program.

Mennonite Mutual Aid plans to expand its involvement in life insurance. Howard Brenneman, MMA president, told the board of directors May 4-5 that MMA has offered life insurance in a limited way for about 40 years, but health insurance has been MMA's major emphasis. Brenneman said it is important that MMA become less reliant on health insurance alone.

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Graduation is in the air. Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., graduated 41 students May 26. Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., graduated 154 on May 21. On May 21, Bluffton (Ohio) College graduated 198, its largest class ever. Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, also graduated its largest class ever, 54, on April 23. Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C., graduated 86 students April 22.

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After waiting 16 years for the Canadian government to evaluate the effects of low-level military flights on their people and land, the Innu of Labrador received a baffling answer this spring. The Federal Environmental Assessment Review Organization panel has recommended a dramatic *increase* in military activity there. While admitting to having inadequate information on the environmental effects of low-level flights and bombing, the panel's environmental assessment report advocates that Canada (a) more than double the number of military flights (from 7,000 to 15,000) per year, (b) establish a second bombing range on Innu land that will use live ammunition, and (c) increase the training areas by 30 percent, to 130,000 square kilometers. The panel justified its report, saying, "severe economic effects would result by terminating the project." "They must have thought EIS means 'Economic Impact Statement,' not 'Environmental Impact Statement,'" says Innu leader Peter Penashue. (*The Catalyst*)

activities they would like to do and support they need. Lind and Neufeld's final recommendations may call for a department to link North Americans with groups and churches in other locations.

Revamping MCC: "This has potential for major change," said Paul Quiring, committee member from Fresno, Calif. "We are talking about the possibility of changing our self-understanding as an agency from one that establishes and maintains program on behalf of the constituency to one that helps constituent groups establish and maintain their own relationships and activities."

But Lind asserted that the still-developing recommendations represent a "significant step forward, but not a step off the track we've been on."

Because of MCC's history, it "has an extensive network that might be more available to our churches and partners to help them come into a more direct relationship with each other," he said.

MCC and mission: The board also discussed how MCC and the various mission agencies supported by the same constituency relate.

"None of us is exempt from giving verbal witness; none is exempt from serving others. I have difficulty with mission boards doing one thing and MCC the other," said Darlene Climenhaga, committee member from Saskatoon.

"MCC develops a relationship with an existing church. It is confusing if a Mennonite agency comes in later with an agenda of planting churches,"said Ed Martin, MCC secretary for Central and Southern Asia.

"How does MCC decide when it is appropriate for church planting to occur? What criteria does MCC use?" asked Dave Dyck of Mennonite Brethren Missions/Service.

Marv Frey, MCC Canada executive director, noted that MCC doesn't have a centralized methodology but considers local contexts.

In the Middle East, for example, Mennonite agencies agreed not to start churches but to work with existing churches. As a result, a Syrian bishop remarked, "all the churches are yours," you "can have communion in all of them," reported Ed Epp, MCC Middle East secretary.

"There is more that unites the various North American mission and relief agencies than separates them," said Hansulrich Gerber, MCC Europe secretary. "World Christianity is now being defined outside of the West. That's a challenge the mission boards and MCC share."

Mission workers hear Argentine church's struggles

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Church leaders from Taiwan and the United States traveled to Argentina in April to help straighten out a church conflict.

At least 12 members of the Argentina Taiwan Mennonite Church in Buenos Aires have left over differences with the pastor and others. Joseph Yang, representative from the Taiwan Mennonite Church, and Sheldon Sawatzky, a General Conference missionary in Taiwan currently living in Pennsylvania, visited the church April 20-26.

The Argentina Taiwan Mennonite Church is a sister church with the Taiwan Mennonite Church. It has received financial support from the Taiwan Mennonite Church and the General Conference until this year.

About 30 people attend the congregation, down from 50 in 1991. Vincent Chen and his wife, Carmen, accepted the pastorate there in November 1991.

The heart of the conflict is over the role of the church and pastor. Some elders expected the pastor to maintain a more traditional role, whereas Chen is more interested in evangelism and discipleship training, said Sawatzky.

When the conflict reached its height in early 1994, several families left. Some of them participate in other churches. The Argentina Taiwan Mennonite Church currently has 17 active members.

The council members who left the church handed over records, council minutes and funds to Yang to give to the new church leadership. New council members were elected at an annual meeting April 23. The Argentina Taiwan Mennonite Church has asked Chen and Robert Lo to provide the leadership for the next year. Both serve as mission workers with the Chinese Christian Mission.

"We cannot solve the problems in such a short time. ... But we hope we can encourage the church to move ahead," said Sawatzky, noting that the congregation wants to remain Mennonite. *Carla Reimer*

COMMENTARY

McNamara's apology a small step

An apology for Vietnam can lay the groundwork to right the wrong.

Earl Martin

What are we to make of former U.S. defense secretary Robert McNamara's confession that U.S. actions in the Vietnam War were "wrong, terribly wrong"? A primary architect of that war policy, McNamara has now admitted that U.S. policy was mistaken.

I lived in Vietnam for five years during the war, assisting refugees. Daily I saw the bombers, nightly I heard the howitzers that blasted the wrath of that "terribly wrong" policy across Vietnam.

But confessions are always difficult. McNamara deserves respect for acknowledging his many errors in interpretation and judgment.

Indeed, his admissions prompt me to search my own soul. In my anger at the war's destruction and in opening myself to "love the enemy" in Vietnam, did I make the White House or Pentagon my new enemy?

During the war, a number of us from church groups went to the White House or U.S. Congress to raise the cry for peace. I remember, for example, telling of my friend's year-old son, burned to death in Vietnam by a U.S. Navy phosphorus flare that crashed through their tile roof as they slept.

Not all church people agreed with our confrontational approach. Sometimes fellow Christians questioned the appropriateness of "criticizing the God-ordained officials."

Christian mandate: But the church has a biblical mandate to raise a voice for the defenseless. When we become friends of the victims of violence, we must tell their stories to those in seats of power. Forming humane public policy calls for more participation from Christians, not less.

Christian loyalties must transcend national lines. McNamara says what anguished him most was "the recognition of the errors we made, that the course we were on was not going to achieve our objective." Yet he never questions the basic objective—presumably to make the world safer for Americans.

Further, one of McNamara's measures for whether the United States was winning the war was the body count, a calculation of how many "enemies" were killed for each "friendly" casualty. Even today, acknowledging a wrong strategy, McNamara justifies such counts. He says, "Things you can count, you ought to count. ... We tried to use body counts as a measurement to help us figure out what we should be doing in Vietnam to win the war while putting our troops at least risk."

The body counts contributed to the taking of innocent lives. A plane dropped napalm onto the village of our closest co-worker in Vietnam, incinerating her mother in the inferno. Such deaths were often figured into the daily body count. A Christian ethic that transcends national boundaries must grieve equally for the death of the enemy as for the friend.

A start: Let us make amends, where possible, for wrongs. If it was "wrong, terribly wrong" for the United States to wage the war, let us —even at this late date—seek to redress our wrongs. There is no righting the defoliated forests, the thousands of maimed survivors, the 58,000 Americans and 3 million Vietnamese killed. Yet we can take steps to "do those things that make for peace."

U.S. government aid could address the war's unfinished business. The United States dropped millions of tons of bombs on Vietnam and Laos. Hundreds of people continue to die each year from unexploded duds.

Today, Mennonite Central Committee makes some progress in the tedious and dangerous task of removing these munitions. But small, private agencies cannot complete the task. The United States and other governments need to contribute to this and other tasks.

Mr. McNamara's confessions, though partial, are important. If we can now agree that the premises of that war were "wrong, terribly wrong," then the fruits of confessions must be the work of peace.

Earl Martin worked with MCC in Vietnam 1966-69 and 1973-75.

Robert Logan told Mennonites to add active faith-sharing and church planting to their traditional strengths of community and service. Logan, who works with Church Resource Ministries, Alta Loma, Calif., spoke to some 50 participants at a Mennonite mission leaders conference at William Carey International University April 22-25. "You are fortunate because it is easier for a denomination to add word witness to deed witness rather than the other way around," he said.

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Nineteen people representing Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and North America met to advance a global Mennonite historiography April 4-7 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. Wilbert R. Shenk, director of the Mission Training Center at AMBS, coordinated the event. "The changed reality calls for a new attempt to write history, taking into account the global nature of the church," Shenk said.

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Lobbyists for the Peace Tax Fund in Canada are taking a new tack. Groups that in the past advocated an independent fund administered by a volunteer committee are now seeking a Peace Tax, which would be part of Canada's income tax code. "The government was never going to make the Peace Tax Fund legal since it created another tax-receiving body and, by putting control of the Fund in the hands of a committee, impinged on Parliament's ability to determine how taxes would be spent," says Chris Derksen Hiebert of Mennonite Central Committee's Ottawa office. Joy Newall of Conscience Canada acknowledges that the new direction is a compromise. "We did it to get something we believe in: to have conscientious objector status recognized within the framework of the tax code," she says. What Conscience Canada gives up is the ability to tell the government where the money should go. "The government will only guarantee that the money will not go to the military," she says.

Record

Thanks to pressure from male auto mechanics, this year's Snap On Inc. calendars no longer feature female models displaying the company's tools. "Some mechanics thought that the women in the photographs, albeit fully clothed, weren't in the best of taste—especially with more women bringing cars in," reports *Training* magazine. The models have been replaced by photos of vintage cars. (*The Marketplace*)

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"Take the Wrap" has organized to make food companies think twice before they market another product encased in superfluous packaging. The consumer campaign has targeted Dannon Yogurt, since its packaging can't be recycled in most communities. Organizers are asking consumers to mail their yogurt containers back to the company and let them figure out what to do with them. They suggest enclosing a letter of explanation with your shipment. (*Salt of the Earth*)

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Abortion activists have come together to form the Common Ground Network for Life and Choice. The organization began in Buffalo, N.Y., after abortion protests divided that city in 1992. Through the group both prolife and prochoice advocates assist women through pregnancies, teach abstinence to teens and protect nutrition programs for children. Common Ground committees have since spread to other cities. For information, contact the Common Ground Network for Life and Choice, 1601 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009, (202) 265-4300.

Position available: **director of development** for **Maple Lawn Homes**, Eureka, Ill., retirement and nursing home.

Send letters of inquiry to **Robert O. Bertsche, 700 N. Main St., Eureka, IL 61530**

DEATHS

Mary Kathryn "Mary Kay" Ramseyer Gerig, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 21 at age 71. She served with her husband, Virgil, in pastorates in Ohio, South Dakota and Indiana and was a Commission on Overseas Mission worker in Lesotho, Southern Africa.

MINISTERS

Mary Dyck, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, is chaplain at Schowalter Villa retirement center in Hesston, Kan.

Terry Goertzen will begin this summer as associate/youth pastor at Cornerstone Church, Saskatoon.

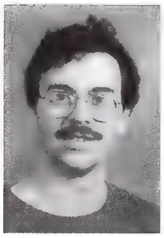
Joan and **John Hockman** were licensed and installed Jan. 27 at Topeka (Ind.) Church.

Tom Kaufman has resigned as pastor at Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.) effective this summer. He will be part of the conference pastoral team for the Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Karen Kehler is summer pastoral intern at Bergthal Church, Didsbury, Alta.

Ed King has resigned as pastor at Calvary Church, Washington, Ill., effective June 1.

WORKERS



Weber

Howard Krehbiel, professor of mathematics at Bluffton (Ohio) College, received emeritus status upon his retirement this May.

Don Weber, Waterloo (Ont.) North Church, began a two-year MCC term in February in New Hamburg, Ont., as a computer services assistant for Self-Help Crafts.

Calgary Mennonite Centre for Newcomers invites applications for the position of **executive director**. Duties include program development, public relations and fund raising. Experience in administration and financial management essential. May be a VS or salaried position—to begin immediately.

Please send application or request information **by June 30** to **CMCN Personnel Committee, c/o Mennonite Central Committee Alberta, 76 Skyline Crescent NE, Calgary, AB T2K 5X7; fax (403) 275-3711.**

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) program director—to help develop new program, manage caseload, work with criminal justice officials, train volunteer mediators. Half-time.

For job description send letter, resume, and names, addresses and phones of three references to:
VORP of Champaign County,
P.O. Box 154, Champaign, IL
61824-0154.

Position is open for **church relations director** for the General Conference Mennonite Church. This position seeks to develop and enhance relationships with member churches in North America. Requires strong organizational and people skills and familiarity with Mennonite beliefs and institutions. Considerable travel and Sunday presentations required, as well as residence in an area of major GC member concentration. Salary commensurate with experience and training.

Before June 15, send resume or call **Gary Franz, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100.**

THERE'S NO SIN IN CINCINNATI

Well, actually, there is, and that is why Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship is searching for a full-time pastor.

Applicant must fulfill a wide range of duties, including preaching, teaching, nurturing and administration. Membership of 70+ is active in both the GC and MC conferences. Most members are professionals from both Mennonite and non-Mennonite backgrounds. The congregation sponsors the biennial Mennonite Arts Weekend, a retreat, small groups, Bible study, annual Self-Help sale, and provides community support.

Send resume to **Linda Headings, 652 Springs Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45255, (513) 753-5867**.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking an **associate editor** to work in marketing services and to assist in meeting the communication and marketing needs of MMA. Specific duties will include written communications and publication specialist for *Sharing* magazine and other newsletters. Qualified candidates need to have either a four-year degree in communications, English or a related field plus four years' professional writing experience, or eight years' professional writing experience. Must be competent in editing, project management and use of WordPerfect and PageMaker software.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. MMA offers an excellent working environment and a competitive benefit package. Send resume to **Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527**.

oar Mennonite Church, angham, Sask., invites applica-ions for a **half-time youth pastor**. This position, with an initial term of two years, becomes available Aug. 1. Applicants should be mature, responsible, evidencing a strong Anabaptist Christian faith, and have a keen interest in youth ministry.

Please send resume, including references, to **Douglas Epp, Box 305, Langham, SK S0K 2L0; fax (306) 283-4725**.

Freeman Academy has the following positions open for the 1995-96 school year:

- **9 to 12 English**, full-time position, w/wo computer/accounting, w/ declam, yearbook, w/wo boys or girls basketball, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.

- **9 to 12 science**, full-time position, w/wo computers/accounting, w/wo boys or girls basketball, w/wo athletic director, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.

Send resume, credentials, transcripts to **Larry Horner, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029; (605) 925-4237**.

Goshen College seeks a **technical director and house manager** for the Umble Center (Theater). Responsibilities include supervision of lighting, audio, set, make-up and costumes for events in the Umble Center; also lighting work for two other facilities on campus. Candidates should have a B.A. and have a strong background in theater and interests in working in an academic setting (including assisting with courses), in supervising student crews and in managing a state-of-the art facility.

Screening of applications began June 1 and the position remains open until filled. Responsibilities begin Aug. 1. This annual contract is at an entry-level administrative rank.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send curriculum vitae and references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**.

Goshen College seeks faculty for a **one-year position in English**. Responsibilities include teaching general and specialized courses in American literature, literary criticism and general education literature and composition. Doctorate preferred; master's degree required. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Screening of applications began June 1 and will continue until the position is filled.

Send curriculum vitae and three references to **John Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**.

CRIME

[illegible]

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Presidential Search Committee
Bluffton College
280 West College Avenue
Bluffton, OH 45817-1196
by June 23, 1995

for the position starting with preparation time sometime during the period January to June, 1996, and presidential responsibilities to be assumed July 1, 1996. All applications and inquiries will be held in confidence. Bluffton College is an equal-opportunity, affirmative action employer.

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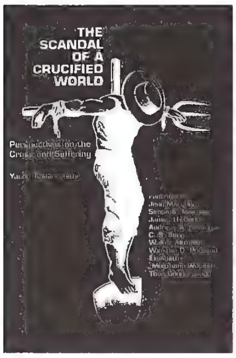
Bluffton OH 45817

BOOKS

THE CRUCIFIED POOR

The Scandal of a Crucified World: Perspectives on the Cross and Suffering, *Yacob Tesfai, editor (Orbis, 1994, 155 pages)*

Reviewed by C. Norman Kraus, Harrisonburg, Va.


THE SCANDAL OF A CRUCIFIED WORLD
Perspectives on the Cross and Suffering

Both the sword and the cross are symbols of death. The first is the symbol of dominion and the power to inflict death. The second of oppression and weakness that suffers death. The first the power of the executor; the second the weakness of the crucified.

Unfortunately these two symbols have become confused in the historical mission of the church.

Since the time of Emperor Constantine the power of the sword has been used to further the religion of the cross. No wonder that many of those to whom the "gospel of the cross" came by means of the sword were, and are, confused.

The essays in this symposium explore the meaning of the cross as God's instrument for reconciling the world. It is well-known that the poor and oppressed of the world identify with the suffering Christ more than the triumphal Christ. They sense intuitively that the crucified Christ is one of them, and that the cross represents God's solidarity with them. But how can this faith become a reconciling, transforming power in their lives?

These essays were first read in conferences sponsored by the Institute for Ecumenical Research in 1990 and 1992. They represent varied perspectives from Luther's theology of the cross to the modern liberation theologies of South America, blacks and feminists. They vary in readability and interest, but they all present a disturbing challenge as they wrestle with the identity and significance of the crucified Christ in a "crucified world."

ROSA PARKS' QUIET VOICE

Quiet Strength *by Rosa Parks with Gregory Reed (Zondervan, 1994, 93 pages)*

Reviewed by Janice Reusser Pauls, McPherson, Kan.

Quiet Strength
Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks was tired that December day in 1955. Not only was she physically tired, she was tired of being pushed around, tired of witnessing the inhumane treatment of people because of the color of their skin. Little did she realize, however, that her simple act of refusing to relinquish her bus seat to a white passenger would start a chain of events that would make history and change a nation.

Nationally recognized as the mother of the civil rights movement in America, Rosa Parks tells her story, together with Gregory J. Reed, in the book *Quiet Strength.* It is a story of an individual who made a difference by trusting in God and doing what she thought was right. Parks did not consider herself an activist. She simply was tired of being treated like a second-class citizen. She was arrested, and four days later the black people of Montgomery, Ala., together with sympathizers of other races, began a 381-day boycott of the city bus line.

Quiet Strength is a small book, easily read in an evening. In it Parks relates how her life's philosophy was formulated by her parents and grandparents and how her faith in God sustained her. She is quick to emphasize, however, that she alone should not receive credit for the success of the boycott. She actually was the third woman arrested on a Montgomery bus, but her arrest was the catalyst that made a difference. Parks says that she simply gave encouragement to a great many other people to fight for their rights as well. "I was just one of many," she writes.

Even though the book does a good job documenting Parks' philosophy and motivation, it is not a dramatic piece. It does not graphically describe the events before and after her arrest in 1955. Rather, Parks uses *Quiet Strength* to convey her message that all people must look to God and come together to live as one, making the world better for us all.

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MISSION TO THE CITY

God So Loves the City: Seeking a Theology for Urban Mission, *edited by Charles Van Engen and Jude Tiersma (MARC Publications, 1994, 313 pages)*

Reviewed by Wilbert R. Shenk, Elkhart, Ind.

This is a fresh attempt to forge a theology for urban mission.

Unusual both in design and execution, it is the fruit of an 18-month collaboration of students and instructor in a doctoral seminar at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif. Each chapter is based on its writer's experience in urban ministry, scholarly analysis of a selected theme, rereading of the Scriptures and finally possible mission action. The diverse backgrounds of the participants enrich their contributions.

The book is organized in four parts: approaching the city, reflecting on the city, being present in the city and seeking a theology for the city.

In the penultimate chapter, Charles Van Engen asks, Why construct a theology of mission for the city? The preceding chapters have emphasized such themes as the power structures that are to the advantage of the elite, the clash between rural cultures and urbanization and a consequent breakdown of family life, the spiritual confusion due to pluralism and rapid change, and the unpreparedness of the church to be the channel of grace, compassion and salvation in today's urban world. It is this unpreparedness that compels such a theological search. We can only be grateful for the leadership of this group.

A MENNONITE CRUSADER

Creative Crusader: Edmund G. Kaufman and Mennonite Community *by James C. Juhnke (Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., 1994, 290 pages)*

Reviewed by J. Winfield Fretz, North Newton, Kan.

A crusader is "one who undertakes to remedy a situation with zeal and enthusiasm." I cannot think of two other words that so aptly and succinctly describe the work and spirit of this dynamic and controversial Mennonite leader of the mid-20th century.

Kaufman's two major areas were the mission field in China and the Bethel College campus in central Kansas. Between his experience in China and at Bethel College he spent several years completing graduate studies at Garrett Biblical Seminary and the University of Chicago. During two years spent teaching at Bluffton (Ohio) College, he became acquainted with Swiss Mennonite educational leaders C. Henry Smith, N.E. Byers and Amos Kreider, all of whose contributions to Mennonite higher education were deeply appreciated.

This biography is logically organized, well written and thoroughly researched. The author comes from the same community of Mennonites at Moundridge, Kan., as does his subject. In fact, the two are distantly related. However, this has not detracted from Juhnke's objectivity.

Juhnke has used the technique of oral history, relying on personal interviews of students, faculty members, religious leaders and friends of Kaufman. Their contributions add greatly to the human interest, vigor and value of the biography.

This biography will reveal a fuller and fairer understanding of this man. The family, the personal struggles, the life-threatening illness, the unlovely criticisms he endured as well as his numerous achievements are fascinatingly narrated in *Creative Crusader*.

Resources

- **Two Mennonite World Conference videos now available: Ekklesia—Peacemaking: Healing and Hope** contains stories from Colombia, Northern Ireland and India, and words from Mennonite leaders in Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Mozambique and Brazil to help put practical peacemaking ideas into practice; $29.95 U.S./$42.50 Cdn. plus shipping. **Ekklesia: Witnessing to Christ in Today's World** has stories from Italy, Japan, Central America and Zimbabwe; $19.95 U.S./$24.95 Cdn. when ordered with video above. To order call toll-free 1-800-999-3534.
- **A Testament of Joy: Studies in Philippians** by David Ewert (Kindred Productions, 1995, $8.95 U.S./$11.95 Cdn.), designed for Bible study groups, goes through Paul's letter to the Philippians and gives historical and geographical background.
- **Salted with Fire: Spirituality for the Faithjustice Journey** by Fred Kammer (Paulist Press, 1995, $14.95) "offers a solid, practical and pastoral primer for those seeking to build a more humane and just society" (back cover).
- **God on the Job: Finding God Who Waits at Work** by Thomas Smith (Paulist Press, 1995, $9.95) offers a practical way to integrate our work and faith.
- **Euthanasia: Moral and Pastoral Perspectives** by Richard M. Gula (Paulist Press, 1994, $5.95) is an overview and critique of the issues surrounding euthanasia.
- **Beyond the Borders: Global Learning and the Churches** is a 16-minute video discussing the struggles of educating about global peace and justice issues. Study guide included. Order from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; order #AV9561, $15 U.S.
- **Educational Resources Relating to Children at Risk**, a brochure, is available free of charge from Office on Global Education/Church World Service, 2115 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218-5755.
- **Brethren Society: The Cultural Transformation of a "Peculiar People"** by Carl F. Bowman (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995, $19.95 paper) offers a history of the Church of the Brethren.
- **Lending a Hand: A Congregation's Guide to Community Investing** (Woodstock Institute) tells how congregations can make a real difference in communities by understanding their community investment options. Available from Woodstock Institute, 407 S. Dearborn, Suite 550, Chicago, IL 60605, (312) 427-8070; $10 each, $3.50 each for orders of 10 or more.
- **Sexual Misconduct in Counseling and Ministry** by Peter Mosgofian and George Ohlschlager (Word, 1995, $10.99 U.S.) includes 10 policies to prevent sexual abuse, taking action toward violators, help and healing for victims, easing the impact on children and understanding legal issues.

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Editorial

Church checkup

How is your congregation doing? Just as our bodies need regular checkups, so, too, do our congregations. We need to look at our corporate health.

Paul calls the church "the body of Christ," made up of "many members" (1 Corinthians 12:12). He emphasizes the need for all the gifts of the Holy Spirit to operate in order for the body to function properly: "If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be?" (1 Corinthians 12:17a).

This leads me to ask, Are all the gifts and all the members of our congregations operating? Or are the pastor and a few other leaders doing most of the work? Or are some tasks being done while others are neglected? Are some gifts being used while others lie dormant?

Paul warns believers "not to think of [themselves] more highly than [they] ought to think" (Romans 12:3). To many of our churches he might have offered the warning not to think more lowly than we ought to think. How many of our church members do not believe or at least do not act on the belief that each of them has a spiritual gift to be used for the benefit of the church? We may think that only those who preach or teach Sunday school or lead worship are spiritually gifted. But "there are varieties of gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:4), and unless these are exercised, the whole body suffers.

We need to learn from each other how to be faithful congregations.

As I talk with people I hear a common refrain: We have trouble finding people to fill the various positions in our church. Whether the need is for Sunday school teachers, deacons, committee members or a church chair, most churches seem to have difficulty finding people to meet that need. The ideal is to find the right person for the right task, but many times the problem is finding anyone at all.

You may think this is only a problem for small congregations, that larger ones have plenty of people to do the tasks. But the problem exists for all sizes of church, for rural as well as urban. There may be many reasons for this dearth of volunteers—for example, more families with both parents working full time, more church members also volunteering for civic or school tasks, less commitment to church as one's primary social activity—but the problem offers no easy solutions.

Some congregations have a high level of commitment among their members, with many involved in doing the various tasks of the church. First Mennonite Church in San Francisco, for example, is able to involve many of its members in the work of the church. Why is this? Russ Schmidt says the church gives him "the ability to survive" (see page 6 of this issue). Karen Kreider Yoder talks about other members caring for her children when she is especially busy. Others talk about the acceptance they feel there.

There is not one formula for involving more of our members in the work of the local congregation. But this is a need many of our churches feel. *The Mennonite* wants to hear from readers whose congregations seem to be working well. Send responses to these questions:

- How do you involve people in various tasks?
- How does your congregation discern its members' spiritual gifts?
- What ways have you discovered to encourage people to volunteer?
- What are things you've tried that do not work?
- If your congregation were to have a checkup, what questions would you want answered?

Be specific. For instance, does your congregation vote for deacons or elders? Do people serve a designated term in a position, or as long as they'll do it?

A friend of mine offered a good way to approach people with how they might be involved in church. He asked, What is it about our church that most excites you? What do you enjoy the most?

If we look at the committees or tasks in our congregations as a drudgery, then we will not be communities of joy. But if we ask ourselves, What in our church do I most enjoy? then we are more likely to serve out of freedom.

We need to learn from each other how to be faithful congregations where the gifts of the Spirit are exercised to build up the body of Christ. Write. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

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The Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ

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JUNE 27, 1995

Share the good news with everyone

- Laughter in heaven (see page 3)
- Don't be like Little Bo Peep (see page 5)
- How your church can bring in new people (see page 6)
- Put out the welcome mat (see page 8)

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Prologue

Mennonites have not been known for evangelism. We like to pitch in and help people, do something useful. But when it comes to talking about our faith, we are often tongue-tied.

The articles in this issue can help you get over whatever hesitations you may have about telling others the good news. We often think of evangelism as some kind of canned presentation, but as Marilyn Miller says (page 3), "Evangelism at its best is doing what Jesus did," caring for the whole person.

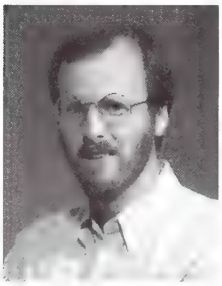
Evangelism also means welcoming people who come to our churches. Marilyn Brenden warns us not to be like Little Bo Peep and leave people alone (page 5).

Edwin Bontrager (page 6) and Roy Walls (page 8) offer practical help in attracting people to our churches and making them feel welcome.

Some people in our congregations have not experienced a heartfelt faith. Read about one "closet unbeliever" (page 8).

Marlene Kropf (page 11) invites us to use short prayers to help us bless God in all our activities throughout each day.

In an interview with author Gary Moore (page 12), J.B. Miller reveals the detrimental effect of pessimism on people's giving to churches and charities.



If you are planning to attend Wichita '95 in July, or if you want to meet with delegates from your congregation to discuss the issues to be considered there, check out the summary of Wichita '95 statements on page 14. *gh*

Next issue: Elderly faithfulness

Cover: Photo by Jean-Claude Lejeune

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

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How a Mennonite pastor and church planter became involved in evangelism

Laughter in Heaven

Marilyn Miller

My excitement about evangelism began early. As a child I was influenced by my pastor-teacher-father. He wrote books about evangelism, but it wasn't the books that influenced me. It was his life. I saw him intentionally befriend unchurched people. I remember him taking time to go fishing regularly with an unchurched man in town. Like Jesus, my father didn't associate only with good church people. One of the greatest joys in his life was helping people have a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ and the church.

My grandmother was another person who had a great influence on me. As she lay on her deathbed, reviewing her life, she told her children, "There's no greater joy in life than pointing a person to Christ."

I saw how important it was to my father and grandmother to help others know Christ, and I saw the joy that came from it. So I, too, wanted to do evangelistic work. When I was in elementary school, several neighbors and my younger sister and I formed an evangelism club. Our clubhouse was a large outbuilding in the yard of a local church near our homes. We sat on the cold gray cement floor and made plans of how we could help save all the sinners in Hesston, Kan. We didn't have any great successes to report, but we did have good intentions.

When I was a student at Hesston College, I taught in a mission for African-Americans in Wichita, Kan., every Sunday. I was more comfortable sharing the gospel with people of different racial background than with the lost in the dominant

Evangelism at its best is doing as Jesus did, caring about the whole person, opening the eyes of the blind, freeing the captives, proclaiming the good news of life under God's reign.

I know how much my life has been blessed because some Mennonites unselfishly gave time, energy and finances to plant a church in Chicago.

Marilyn Miller

white society. That's a confession.

I also found much learning and joy in that work. It brought me to the conclusion that I wanted to continue in mission work. Because I didn't know it was possible for a woman to be a minister, I decided I would marry a minister so I could do mission work with him.

However, I fell in love with Maurice Miller, who said he did not want to be a minister or a missionary. My heart ruled over my head, and we were married.

Later, when we were living in Denver and our three children were in school, I started seminary studies. A high point in my pilgrimage in evangelism came in 1983, when I took a seminary class from Mortimer Arias called "Kingdom Evangelism." He helped us see that the good news Jesus shared—the good news we have to share—is the kingdom, or reign, of God. He helped us see that this includes both deeds and words.

This class helped me discard negative stereotypes of evangelism. No longer did I have the old stereotypes of evangelism as people going door to door pushing their beliefs on others. Evangelism became a way of loving people, of bringing joy and unity to the world. Evangelism at its best is doing as Jesus did, caring about the whole person, opening the eyes of the blind, freeing the captives, proclaiming the good news of life under God's reign.

Soon after taking this class, I was called to be a church planter in Boulder, Colo. A first-time visitor came to me after one Sunday service and said, "I like the feel of the church here, but I'm an atheist. Is it OK if I come back?"

I said, "Sure, as long as you realize that we are going to talk about God here. We'd love to have you." And she came to church regularly.

One Saturday, as she walked with others from Boulder to Rocky Flats to protest the making of bombs, she told people about our church and invited them to come. The next day there were five new people at church.

Befuddled: I remember saying to her, "This is hard for me to understand. You're inviting people to come to our church, yet a lot of our members who are good Christians and have attended church all their lives are not asking people to come. Why do you invite others?"

She answered, "I ask them because I think it would be good for them."

I thought awhile and said, "I think others believe the church would be good for outsiders, too, but they don't invite them very often. Maybe they're afraid they'll be rejected."

She said, "I don't care if I get rejected. I'm asking it for their good. If it's not for their good, I don't want them to come."

This woman's words help me do evangelism—when I remember that it's for others' good that I'm doing it.

I have experienced this in my own life. My mother grew up in Chicago, and I'm thankful that Mennonites decided to start a mission church there. And I'm thankful someone in that church invited that small girl to come. She went, became a part of a church family and was baptized. When my father came there to hold meetings, he met her and married her.

All their nine children were blessed by having been a part of this church family. That is why I do the work I'm doing today. I know how much my life has been blessed because some Mennonites unselfishly gave time, energy and finances to plant a church in Chicago. I know how important it was that someone intentionally reached out to my mother and invited her to church.

Menno Simons said, "This is my only joy and the desire of my heart—that I may extend the borders of the kingdom of God." What was true for Menno Simons can be true for you and me. It was true for Jesus.

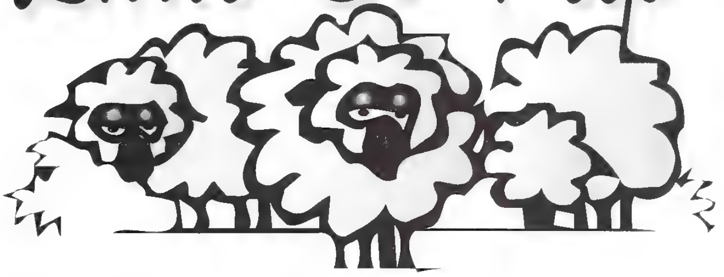
There is joy in heaven and joy on earth when the lost are intentionally sought out and found. Luke 15 records parables Jesus told about a lost sheep, a lost coin and a lost son. He wanted the scribes and Pharisees to understand the importance of seeking and finding the lost.

We don't know if the Pharisees understood. What is important is if we do. Do we understand the joy there is in heaven and earth when the lost are intentionally sought out and found? Are you—am I—contributing to that laughter in heaven?

Marilyn Miller is director of outreach ministries for the General Conference Mennonite Church. Mary E. Klassen excerpted and edited this article.

How you can reach out to inactive members and bring them into your church

DON'T BE LIKE Little Bo Peep



Marilyn D. Brenden

In rapid succession I experienced the death of a friend, a frightening brush with violence and an unsettling loss of peers from my congregation. The negative effects of these traumatic 13 months were later intensified by a sudden, forced move and accompanying financial problems. I did not want to leave the church; I simply had no energy to cope with all that had taken place, and God seemed too far away to help or care.

I am one of those people active members are afraid to visit. I am an inactive church member, or at least I used to be. I am not unique among Christians. Many active members become inactive at some point during their adult years.

> **We in the church often stand by and watch inactive brothers and sisters drown spiritually and emotionally in a sea of sadness, crisis and pain.**

Some of these individuals eventually return to a worshiping community. So why not simply let human nature take its course and wait for the cycle of departure and return to complete itself?

The church has often taken such a laissez-faire approach toward inactive members. Too often congregations have adopted what I call the "Little Bo Peep" theory of ministry: Just leave them alone and they'll come home.

But years may pass before inactive members return, and many never come back. Can we continue to justify a hands-off attitude, given the human pain that is never resolved and the loss to the church of the spiritual gifts of alienated members?

If spiritual apathy were the chief motivating force that leads people out of the church, there might be some justification for keeping our distance. But few people simply lose interest. Apparent apathy is rather the veneer that covers other reasons for leaving, such as a lack of bonding with the congregation, a crisis of faith, conflict with another person in the church, a personal loss or a hurtful experience are only a few of the causes cited by Kenneth Haugk in his book *Reopening the Back Door*.

Sea of sadness: If we were to see a person drowning in a dangerous sea, none of us would begrudge the effort it takes to throw the person a lifeline. Yet we in the church often stand by and watch inactive brothers and sisters drown spiritually and emotionally in a sea of sadness, crisis and pain.

We must find better ways of dealing with church inactivity. We need to get involved, to care. Most of us recognize this need for caring outreach but are afraid and don't know what to say, so we do nothing.

All we need to do is listen, empathize with people's pain and offer our love. Nothing more is required of us than to love our inactive neighbors as ourselves.

I challenge you to begin today to make a difference in the life of one inactive person.

Marilyn D. Brenden lives in Silverton, Ore.

how your church can bring in new people

G. Edwin Bontrager

Side-door activities

Our congregations can become closed circles, whether we realize it or not. This happens especially to older churches that don't experience the integration of newer people into church life.

The barricades against new people may not be intentionally erected, however. They arise because congregational members meet with the same people and do the same things together over a long period of time. This prevents the "uninitiated" from fitting in because there is no common history. Building new relationships also takes time, and established members don't personally need new friends.

You can help remove this barricade by increasing entry points to your church. Many people born before 1935 made their initial contact with the church on Sunday morning. Today, entry points are mostly "side-door" entrances, instead of "front-door."

Side-door entrances tend to be socially oriented. Through these, people can more easily become a vital part of other ongoing activities. How can you increase the possibilities for including new people? Try these side-door approaches:

- Organize a gathering for community people who grew up in a particular area.
- Bring a friend to a small group.
- Set up a six-week divorce recovery workshop.
- Organize a softball team in a league that doesn't require all team players to attend church.
- Organize a father-daughter miniature golfing event.
- Offer a marriage enrichment series in which each couple brings an unchurched couple.
- Begin a "Mother's Time Out" program on a weekday morning.
- Plan a "what you always wanted to know about Mennonites and Amish but never had a chance to ask" night and invite new neighbors.
- Start a women's aerobic program.
- Charter a bus to attend a major league sports event and encourage church members to bring a non-Christian friend.

This is only a partial list. One congregation added a second staff person to initiate and coordinate new entry points. For years the church had plateaued. With the new staff person, the church has been able to reach out in caring ways to many new people.

Side-door activities can serve as an extra "punch" for us Mennonites because they offer a setting in which myths about Mennonites can be dispelled. The informal setting, personal interaction and relaxed atmosphere put everyone on a common level. Breaking this social barrier may be the first step in helping your neighbor eventually become a vital part of your church.

Side-door activities offer a setting in which myths about Mennonites can be dispelled.

Sunday school

The outlook for Sunday schools in North America is not good. In 1972, total enrollment in the United States was 40 million; today it is about 26 million. Canada is also experiencing a decline.

What about our Mennonite congregations? Though we have given nurture high profile and have produced excellent curricula for study, many Sunday schools are struggling. They are not holding their own, and many are ineffective in assimilating new people.

How can the Sunday school open the front door to newcomers and keep regulars from leaving by the side door?

1. What is the reason for your Sunday school? A class with an inward focus tries to maintain what it has, and ministers only to existing members. An outward-directed class exists to equip people for ministry in order to fulfill the Great Commission.

2. Are you prepared for visitors? The class that wants to grow and reach new people will consider the following:

- Ask ushers to personally escort visitors to the class; have an outgoing greeter who sets the tone of friendliness.
- Always have two to three extra chairs to show guests that you expect company; introduce visitors (where appropriate, complement visitor introductions with those of class members).
- Keep a record of visitors for possible follow-up.

3. What is your class climate toward visitors? In one class I attended, I noticed that regular class members tended to leave chairs between themselves and a new couple who had begun attending. Does the basic climate say, "We're glad you came" or, "What are you doing in our class?" Other things to consider are these:

Creative ways your congregation can welcome newcomers

- Always have extra copies of the printed lesson (book or quarterly.
- Provide teachers who are knowledgable, self-confident and interesting. A visitor will soon discover if teachers are "filling in" and fulfilling an obligation, or if they are present to bring a new challenge in Christian discipleship and mission.
- Welcome the visitor to share in the discussion.

4. Do you have plans to invite and keep? If your class has set goals for growth and is caring about new people, there are a few steps you will take:

- Increase the number of invitations to people. Make sure church visitors are personally invited to Sunday school.
- Follow up on visitors. If your church has a visitation follow-up program, coordinate this. If not, do it as a class. The church secretary could also send a note in the mail.
- Increase the caring capacity of your members. Find out about the family situation and needs of the newcomer and minister where appropriate.
- Plan monthly socials and find ways to include new acquaintances.

Add zest to your mission committee

The purpose of the mission committee in your congregation is to lead in mission. But many times the committee gives almost all its attention to mission concerns outside the local church, like the city rescue mission, singing in the nearby nursing home or lining up a missionary speaker.

All these need to continue, but who in your congregation is creatively thinking of ways to reach those who are unchurched or help new members become assimilated? Congregational growth is an illusive dream unless we devote some creative thought to it.

At Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., where I was a member, we launched an "ad hoc outreach committee," a subgroup of our missions and service committee. Our focus statement was, "To work aggressively at envisioning for community outreach, finding ways to invite and assimilate new people."

As one of our pastors on the committee said, "This committee has helped us initiate some things that we weren't taking the time to think about before."

We didn't do all the following, but we made progress on some. Here are some ideas for you:

1. Check traffic flow and consider using parking attendants.

2. Evaluate signs, both outside and inside.

3. Examine your welcoming system. Is it better to assign outgoing "people-person" volunteers on a longer-term basis, or see greeting people as a gift everyone has?

4. Order name labels for greeters and ushers so visitors can easily recognize them.

5. Have a "Bring a Friend Sunday."

6. Talk about including a regular outreach column in your church newsletter.

7. Discover the best approach for obtaining names of visitors. (We began using pew note pads where everyone writes in their name.)

8. Follow up on visitors. Should it be done by phone or personal visit? If visiting, when should it be done and who should do it?

9. Develop a brochure that will help new people learn about your congregation.

10. Take a community survey.

11. Evaluate what happens to visitors after church is over.

In your vision for mission, try not to forget the needs of unchurched people closer to home.

G. Edwin Bontrager is director of the Living In Faithful Evangelism Program for the Mennonite Church and pastor at Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.

What about two worship services?

A few Mennonite congregations across our land have embarked on providing two worship services Sunday morning. What are the advantages?

1. Relieves cramped facilities
2. Doubles parking area
3. Provides a variety of worship
4. Offers options of time
5. Encourages outreach to the unreached

Increased attendance will not come easily, however. Two services will assist the church in reaching out to more people only if there is a positive motivation by leaders for outreach.

put out the *welcome* mat

How to help visitors feel they are important

Roy Walls

Friendship is often one of the most influential elements in reaching out to unchurched or unsaved people. As concerned Christians, we often focus on how to attract or invite people to our communities of faith or celebrations of worship. But how many of them come, look around, then slip quietly out the back door?

People need to know they are important, not because they add to our numbers on a Sunday morning but because they are important to God and to us. Expressing this to visitors cannot be left to haphazard or random follow-up. This critical part of the church's ministry needs to be planned prayerfully and carefully, so no one slips out the back door unnoticed or untouched.

One idea to work at this is a program called the "VIP (Visitors are Important People) Ministry Team." The basic concept is:

1. **Find several people** in the congregation who care about visitors and are willing to work as a team to reach out to them. (Note: These people should be other than the pastor. Visitors know a pastor's job is to care. They need to know that other people care, too.)
2. **When a visitor attends any service, get some basic information** (i.e., address, telephone number, names of children). Write it down, or it will be forgotten.
3. **Within 36 hours of the initial encounter,** a team member should personally contact visitors to let them know how good it was having them be a part of the service, and to express God's love and the church's caring for them.
4. **Send a letter** from the church stating the same message.
5. **Have the pastor schedule a visit.**
6. **Have the same team member call the day before the next service,** inviting visitors to sit with them.
7. **In the weeks following,** the team member invites them to Bible studies, church social functions, sends several personal notes and lets them know what the church is doing (a church newsletter works well for this). The important thing is to let visitors know they are welcome.
8. **Plan to invite visitors into church members' homes** for meals, visits, games—whatever they're open to sharing or receiving. And encourage visitors also to reach out.

Don't overdo the welcome; do listen and be sensitive to the felt needs of visitors and respond appropriately. Some may prefer to observe awhile. If visitors aren't ready yet for further involvement or sense that outreach efforts are forced and insincere, they will become strangers once again.

Can we put out the welcome mat and close the back doors of our churches?

Roy Walls is a pastor in Clarence Center, N.Y.

Confession of a closet unbeliever

Anonymous

I grew up in a small, exclusively (at that time) Mennonite community. My parents took us to church and church activities. We had devotions at home every day and prayed before meals. In day-to-day living my parents practiced their belief in a manner that could have been mistaken for humanism by anyone who didn't know them well.

Early on the difference between right and wrong was clear to me, but the nature of God and God's influence in our day-to-day decision making was not talked about. For example, we never sat down and prayed at significant points of joy or sorrow, confusion, mystery or pain.

I was baptized at age 13, along with everyone else in my class, and I have felt like a hypocrite ever since. In college, the first time out on my own, I spent many a Sunday morning feeling guilty for not going to church. Since then I have learned to release some of that guilt, because it was not making me more interested in being a Christian and was not benefiting my mental health.

Throughout the years I have seen the fervent passion of deep faith in others, so I know it can happen, and not just in a loud, obtrusive, obnoxious manner, but also in quiet, committed ways. I have witnessed the emotional highs of accepting Christ, seen physical changes in others and read enough to believe that Christianity is a viable way of living. None of this has happened for me.

Currently our family is attending church, primarily for the community support it provides, as a moral basis on which our children can learn to live responsibly, and to a lesser extent for the social opportunities it provides. I am no less and no more a believer than before. If someone were to come straight out and ask me, I hope I would have the courage to answer truthfully that I am not a Christian. More likely I would avoid giving a direct answer.

Am I unusual? I don't know. I suspect there are other closet unbelievers who are active members of the church (as I am) who also do not want to make an issue of their lack of faith.

Letters

STILL LEARNING

I find *The Mennonite* informative and interesting. My subscription will expire in June, and I'd like to continue receiving it.

I am an African-American prisoner who happens to be a Christian for over 14 years now. I'm still learning, especially from *The Mennonite*. Keep up the wonderful work. *Richard A. Canape, Ely, Nev.*

Editor's note: *We have renewed Richard's subscription from our prisoners fund, to which you may contribute.*

DEEPEN COMMUNICATION

I was touched by the April 25 editorial in response to the Central District Conference.

I am sad as I look at the landscape of our Anabaptist/Mennonite spiritual heritage and see all the casualties scattered hither and yon—indeed, I wonder if most of the casualties don't come from our "casual ties" with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. We draw swords—presumably in the power of the Spirit (yet the spirit of power so easily manifests itself)—and many presumed sinners get sinned against, cut down and cut off, by presumably well-meaning people who "think they are doing a holy duty for God."

To be sure, we are called to be a holy people, yet arrogance, condescension and the need to be right or in control so easily creep in. I long for more mutual respect and reverence. There is, in my way of thinking, too much "insisting on our own way" in many of these matters, too much presumption concerning others' lack of seriousness and sincerity in their biblical understandings and ways of experiencing the reality of Christ Jesus. So we isolate, we separate, we "take our toys and go home," so to speak.

It is fair to ask, "Yes, but where do we draw the line?" Perhaps the lines we are invited to keep drawing are lines of communication—deepening communion with God and with one another. *Doug Reichenbach, Elkhart, Ind.*

ANY MENNONITES NEAR BRANSON?

To readers of *The Mennonite*: Can you help me? I grew up in North Newton, Kan., in a Mennonite community but now live in Branson, Mo., and desperately miss my church and the way of life there. My husband and I have searched and searched but can find no trace of a Mennonite church here. Does anyone out there know of one, or do you have relatives in this area that may share my feelings? Any information would be greatly appreciated. *Nikki Hightree, Kirbyville, Mo.*

MENNONITE CHURCH OF CHRIST

I suggest that all our Mennonite groups adopt the umbrella name "Mennonite Church of Christ." We need to have Christ in our name; otherwise our faith may be confused with other religions. We can keep our current conference names, but the umbrella name would unify us as one denomination: Grace Mennonite Church of Christ, Goshen College Mennonite Church of Christ, etc. Our witness to the world would be one of unity in this way.

To carry the name Mennonite Church of Christ would be an incentive to live up to that name. Christ's church is one, not divisive. When we recognize the variety of gifts within the church, and that we need each other, it would minimize competitiveness and jealousy. The healing ministries of the church need to be open to all—the emotionally ill, military veterans, homosexuals, people of all races, etc. Taking care of the poor, the suffering and the lonely is an act of worship (Proverbs 14:31 TEV).

Mennonite Central Committee is already a model of the Mennonite Church of Christ. Eighteen Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups belong to it. Our mission is to feed the body and soul of people with the touch of love. Together the Mennonite groups are a "rich mosaic," as MCC executive secretary John Lapp puts it. Each group is unique, but we are more beautiful and useful working together.

The Mennonite Church of Christ could identify closely with the Mennonite World Conference. The current MWC president, Raul Garcia from Argentina, and his wife, Anita, could help lift us from our provincialism to a church with a global vision. The MWC newsletter *Courier* could be expanded to a monthly magazine that would help bind us together as the Mennonite Church of Christ. All our current periodicals could remain as they are, except that they should also include the umbrella name, Mennonite Church of Christ. The same could be true of our various conferences, organizations and schools. *Geraldine Harder, North Newton, Kan.*

ACCOMPLICES IN MURDER

U.S. Army Sgt. Timothy McVeigh was proud to participate in world history's most intensive bombing—the U.S. bombing of Iraq in the Gulf War. The U.S. military trained him to kill on command with no conscience. One lesson he failed to retain was *not* to murder innocent children unless Uncle Sam tells you to—like in Waco, Iraq, Vietnam, Cambodia …

Most Americans cheered the U.S. slaughter in Iraq and waved U.S. flags. They paid taxes to recruit and train their children in international terrorism. When will we learn how our evil boomerangs upon us?

Every federal income taxpayer is an accomplice in the murder of multitudes of children worldwide just as precious as the bombed children in Oklahoma. President Clinton justifies President Truman's bombing of children in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The U.S. pilot who bombed Nagasaki claims no regrets.

Presidents Johnson and Nixon murdered thousands of children in Southeast Asia. Has President Clinton called for the prosecution and execution of Robert McNamara?

President Reagan murdered thousands of children in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. President Bush murdered thousands of children in Latin America and Iraq. Bush murdered 500 times as many people in Iraq as McVeigh did in Oklahoma. None of these presidents has publicly repented of these atrocities. They show as little conscience as McVeigh.

What preachers, priests, rabbis, editors, teachers and commentators have the guts to see and to say all of this—loud and clear?

We can overcome lies only with truth. We can overcome evil only with good.

continued on next page

LETTERS *continued*

We all are capable of ferocious violence and of marvelous compassion. *Don Schrader, Albuquerque, N.M.*

FORGIVE THEM

After hearing about the terrible bombing in Oklahoma, I knew exactly what we should do to those rotten people who are responsible for all of the pain, suffering and death from that bomb: We should forgive them.

"Yes, if you forgive others for the things they do wrong, then your Father in heaven will also forgive you for the wrong things that you do. But if you don't forgive the wrongs of others then your Father in heaven will not forgive the wrong things you do" (Matthew 6:14-15).

Of course, those rotten bombers don't deserve to be forgiven, but do we? Are we any better? Romans 3:23 says, "We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

The only way for any of us to be saved from hell is to tell God that we are sorry for our sins, little and big, and to accept what Jesus did on the cross as payment for our sins. The blood Jesus shed for us on the cross is the only difference between heaven and hell (Ephesians 2:13-14).

None of us deserves to be forgiven, but not forgiving other people will only take us further away from the peace of mind that we all need, especially when considering the horror of the Oklahoma City bombing.

God wants us to have the peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7) and to have fullness of life (John 10:10). That can happen only if we forgive and give ourselves totally to Jesus Christ. *Shannon Korf, Hanston, Kan.*

THREE MODERATE PERSPECTIVES

Here are three moderate perspectives that church congregations can and do hold concerning people involved in a homosexual life partnership. A "life partnership" is a type of covenanted relationship between two people of the same sex. This form of relationship is characterized by commitment (formal), exclusivity (monogamy) and wholeness (spiritual, emotional, intellectual, financial and sexual intimacy).

Perspective one: The congregation officially opposes life partnership because any and all sexual behavior between two people of the same sex is sin. Even though the congregation condemns the specific sin, it also accepts (loves) the person who commits the sin. This means that the congregation does not exclude from membership a person who is committing the sin of homosexual behavior. On the contrary, inclusion into the body of Christ is the means by which people can find the strength to repent of their sinful behavior.

Perspective two: The local congregation holds that marriage (heterosexual) is the only prototypical form of covenanted relationship. No particular life partnership is an exemplar (best example) of a covenanted relationship. However, this type of relationship is not a sin; it is fully moral. The congregation does not officially support or oppose any particular life partnership. However, it does officially prohibit excluding a person from church membership on the basis of being in such a relationship.

Perspective three: Involvement in a life partnership (homosexual behavior) is a sin. A person who does not repent and change his or her behavior is barred from church membership. However, a person who has a homosexual orientation but who abstains from homosexual behavior is enthusiastically welcomed into the life of the congregation as a member. Such a person can also take on any positions of leadership within the body of Christ. *Brent A. Koehn, Arlington, Texas*

CORRESPONDENCE REQUESTED

I am incarcerated in Lansing (Kan.) Correctional Facility. I would like to correspond with any of your readers who wish to. *Mark Dowling #51458, L.C.F., P.O. Box 2, Lansing, KS 66043*

DO NOT EXPEL CHURCHES

An open letter to Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church conferences:

In keeping with the spirit of the vision statement prepared for Wichita '95, "Vision: Healing and Hope," we ask that efforts to expel churches that have gay and lesbian members be discontinued.

The vision statement calls us to follow Jesus Christ more faithfully, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace that practice a love, forgiveness and hospitality that affirms our diversity and heals our brokenness, and to live as people of healing and hope.

To exclude those who accept gay and lesbian people contradicts the vision. Exclusion likely pressures these members to carry the destructive burden of secrecy, and discourages openness to the community's resources of healing and hope.

Our church statements on homosexuality have not required exclusion from membership but, rather, the openness of dialogue. It is likely that all our churches have members of homosexual orientation, which places us in the difficult position of being among stone throwers (John 8:7) if we support a policy of exclusion. Rather than expel churches, let us follow the example of the Tidewater, Va., churches who have chosen to dialogue with their members who are part of the military. *Ryan Ahlgrim, Stanley Bohn, Marjorie Reimer Ediger, Eldon E. Esau, Calvin Flickinger, Matthew C. Friesen, James Gingerich, Steven Goering, Susan Ortman Goering, Gary Harder, Elfrieda Hiebert, Rhonda Horsch, Dorothea Janzen, Dorothy Wiebe Johnson, Steve Wiebe Johnson, LeRoy Kennel, Pauline Kennel, Kathy Landis, Bonnie Neufeld, Chuck Neufeld, Weldon Nisly, Brenda Sawatsky Paetkau, Miles Reimer, Steven G. Schmidt, Myron Schrag, Earl Sears, Ann Showalter, Joyce M. Shutt, Marlene Smucker, Stan Smucker, Muriel T. Stackley, Rod Stafford, Donald R. Steelberg, David Swartz, Jerry Toews, Leann Toews, John Waltner, David M. Whitermore, Bruce Yoder*

Ideas your church can try

Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Plum Coulee, Man., held a "self-giving" auction last Feb. 13 to raise money for the congregation's building fund. People were invited to write down what they were willing to give and the amount of times. For example, "I will bake a loaf of bread every week for a month." Each item was auctioned to the highest bidder. It was then up to people to follow through on their commitment.

Learning to pray

• • • ▾

Let all things their Creator bless

Celtic prayers teach us to bless God in every activity and every part of the day.

Marlene Kropf

With a wide sweep that encompasses wind and water, morning and evening, flowers and fruits, and all folk of gentle heart, the last stanza of the hymn attributed to St. Francis of Assisi invites all creatures of our God and King to "bless God." In the warm, fragrant days of summer, it is not difficult to imagine such praise arising from all creation.

No doubt Francis took his poetic inspiration from the Psalms: "Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!" (Psalm 150:6). Throughout the Psalms mountains and hills, birds and creeping things, wild and tame animals and all people are called to bless God's name forever. In the Hebrew imagination every creature joins a vast song of praise in God's honor.

The notion that creatures owe a blessing to their Maker arises from our earliest sacred story. In the beginning God blessed all that was made and called it good (Genesis 1:31). In response to such lavish creativity and generosity, human beings respond with gratitude and adoration. Blessing God is a way of saying, "We recognize the immensity of God's goodness, and we give thanks. All we are and have is a gift."

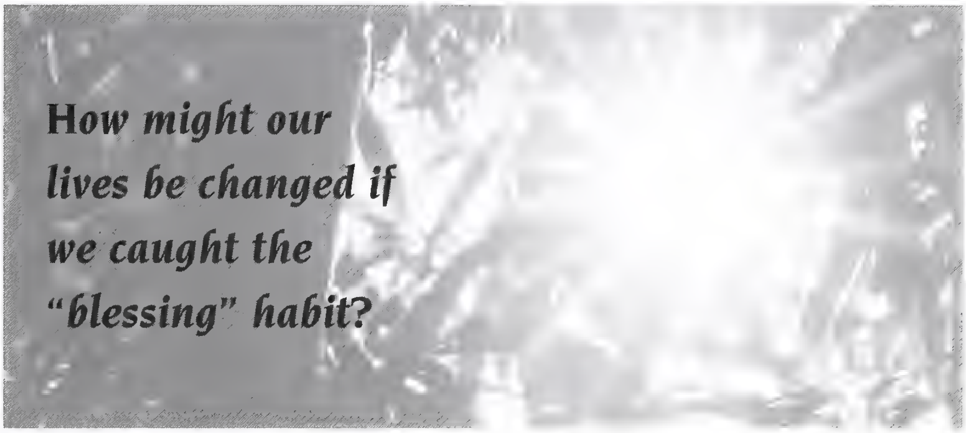
Like the Hebrews who preceded them, the ancient Celtic people also

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

lived with a daily awareness of God's blessing. In the most ordinary and mundane tasks, the Celts recognized God's presence and invoked God's blessing. Whenever travelers set out on a journey, they stopped first to ask a blessing:

I on Thy path, O God,
Thou, God, in my steps.

Bless to me, O God,
The earth beneath my feet,
Bless to me, O God,
The path whereon I go.



Before a farmer harvested a new crop, he would gather his family in the field, take up his sickle and face the sun with the first handful of corn. Together the family prayed:

God, bless thou thyself my reaping,
Each ridge, and plain, and field,
Each sickle curved, shapely, hard,
Each ear and handful in the sheaf;
Each ear and handful in the sheaf.

Young girls learned blessings and songs for household tasks from their mothers and grandmothers and passed them on to their children. From lighting the fire in the morning to extinguishing the flame at night (and for every task in between), women invited God's blessing upon their work. They also called upon the friends of God to assist with a blessing. As they milked their cows, women prayed:

Come, Mary, and milk my cow,
Come, Bride, and encompass her,
Come, Columba the benign,
And twine thine arm around my cow.

Bless, O God, my little cow
Bless, O God, my desire;
Bless thou my partnership
And the milking of my hands, O God.

Bless, O God, each teat
Bless, O God, each finger;
Bless thou each drop
That goes into my pitcher, O God.

Daily tasks: Modern folk whose days are spent far from lakes and streams and grassy fields may find it more difficult to keep alive such a vivid sense of God's presence and blessing. Still, it may be a useful discipline to cultivate the habit of blessing God and invoking God's blessing upon our daily tasks.

How might our lives be changed if we caught the "blessing" habit? What if our first action every day was to bless God for the gift of light? What if we blessed God in all the moments we wait at stoplights? What if we blessed our children each day of their lives? What if we blessed our houses or cars or computers? What if we even blessed our enemies?

Who is willing to try it and see what happens?

Celtic prayers are cited from Every Earthly Blessing: Celebrating a Spirituality of Creation *by Esther de Waal (Servant Publications, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1991).*

Fiscal health

On the edge of the promised land

An interview with author Gary Moore

J.B. Miller

Gary Moore, a former senior vice president at Paine Webber and author of the popular book *The Christian's Guide to Wise Investing,* recently spoke to a group of Mennonites in Pittsburgh. The following interview followed that meeting.

The Bible talks a great deal about money. A passage often cited is the one about the rich person and a camel going through the eye of the needle. What is your perspective on wealth?

Gary: I've spent the last eight years trying to work my way through that needle, and I still think it is difficult. I think it takes a lot of discernment, a lot of study. But I think we need to turn what is often a quantitative debate into a qualitative debate. In other words, the church talks a great deal about how much you have. The Scriptures also talk about the parable of the talents, and I think the most important issue today is not how much you have but what you do with what you have. It's more important what we create and how we use it than how much we have. It's far more important to ask the wealthy how they got their wealth, what are they doing with it now and what are they ultimately going to do with it.

Sir John Templeton, the founder of the legendary Templeton Funds, went from being a poor farm boy to become a multibillionaire, one of the world's richest people. In spite of his wealth, he is respected in the religious community because he has written in his books that he doesn't believe he owns any wealth; he believes he is simply here to be a steward of the wealth that belongs to God. *Forbes* magazine says that Templeton is probably going to give these billions to churches and charities around the world. I don't think God is going to hold his wealth against him.

J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

I don't buy into prosperity theology. I also don't buy into the concept that you can't grow wealthy like Sir John Templeton. It's a qualitative issue.

Why do you think so many Christians follow the "doom and gloom" teaching of some Christian radio and television speakers?

Gary: In the early 1900s, mainline churches decided to build universities and hospitals. Conservative evangelicals later built radio and television stations. The dilemma today is that these stations have the same financial pressures as commercial stations. And in the economic arena the best sellers in the past 10 to 15 years have been the doom and gloom books, even though the Dow Jones industrial average has moved from 800 to close to 4500. Doom and gloom sells. The popular press creates the worst headlines they can find.

Those who have a pessimistic view of the future give 50 percent less to churches and charities than those who don't.

Conservative evangelicals are also in the electronic media, and to get people's attention they have to give people the same kind of stuff in order to move a product. Keep in mind that many of these people are ministers, and most have probably not had an economics course.

Conservative evangelical media reflect the culture. We have a serious problem if we cannot distinguish political and commercial illusions from economic reality. Ministers often take their lead from secular media, which often take their lead from politicians, and they end up selling bad news instead of proclaiming good news.

What impact does this doom and gloom have on our people?

Gary: Independent Sector, which does the largest study on charitable giving, in 1990 found that those who have a pessimistic view of the future give 50 percent less to churches and charities than those who don't.

We have gone through four years of economic recovery, yet in 1994 people said they are even more worried about the economic future, and those who worry are now giving 50 percent less to churches and charities. Conservative evangelical Christianity sells bad news. The churches often pass on the news, and it's killing charitable giving. Yet Templeton said that with the collapse of communism in 1989 we are headed for the 20 most prosperous years in the history of the world.

In 1980 he was talking about the Dow going to 3000 when it was in the 800 range, and everyone was buying doom and gloom. In 1991 he was talking about the Dow going to 6000 when it was 2900, and everyone was buying doom and gloom. It's now close to 4500, and while the churches keep teaching this economic doom and gloom, he keeps getting richer and richer and giving the money away to churches and charities.

Any closing comments?

Gary: I like the story of Joshua and Caleb. God had told the Hebrews they were to be given the promised land. They didn't believe God but got right to the edge and said, "Well, we're going to send out our religious leaders to evaluate our future." Twelve spies went out; all 12 came back saying, "There are both riches and giants in our future."

But Joshua and Caleb said that God has made a promise to us, and we can handle the giants with God's strength. The people were furious and were going to stone Joshua and Caleb.

The giants didn't keep the people out of the promised land. But because of their fear, an entire generation wandered around not enjoying the promises of God.

We are sitting on the edge of the promised land. As we approach the 21st century, we must decide whether to believe the prophecy of a large majority of our conservative religious leaders or to believe God's promises.

THE
Mennonite

JUNE 27, 1995

WINDOW TO MISSION

BUILDING BRIDGES WITHIN THE FAMILY

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another.
Romans 15:5, NRSV

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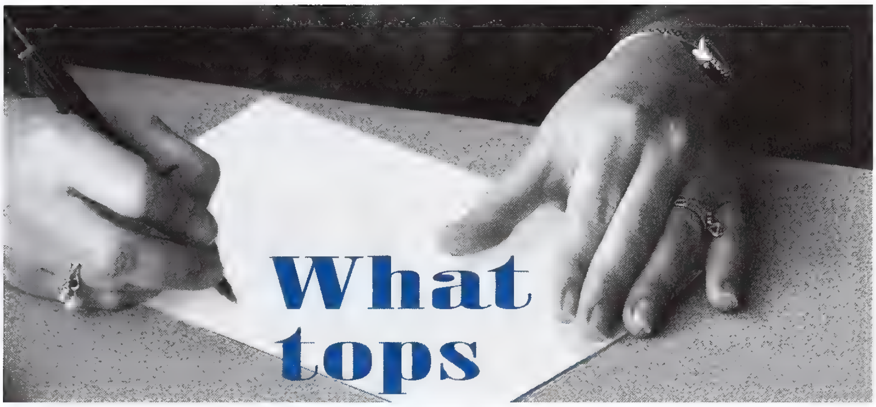
Introducing the new '95-'96 study guide

Cover credit: Virgil Schmidt, director of grounds for Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., enjoys photography. He and his wife, Doris, are active in Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.



What tops your list?

by April Yamasaki

The talk show host asked the panel, "In your role as a mother, what is your greatest challenge?" Without hesitation one mother answered, "The feeling of isolation," and the others quickly agreed.

Mothers at home with young children may feel isolated, but isolation in families does not stop there. Fathers working long hours may feel isolated from their children. Grandparents living at a distance may feel isolated from their grandchildren. Teens may feel isolated from their parents.

The pressures of work outside the home, increased family mobility, the busyness of urban and rural life—all these and more tend to separate family members.

In light of these realities, how can we build bridges among family members? How can families move toward wholeness?

Eight community forums throughout British Columbia explored similar questions in 1992. The B.C. Council for the Family wanted to encourage building healthy families. At the top of their list was the need for open and honest communication. What follows are some of their suggestions to help build communication within the family. You may not find all of these ideas appropriate for your situation, but do consider them with your own family in mind.

- **Make a date with your family.** Walk, cycle or hike together. Visit a museum, art exhibit or craft fair. Build your own family traditions.
- **Realize that good communication is more than words.** Also express yourself with a hug, a special note in a lunch box or watching a sunset together.
- **Hold a family council.** Regular meetings provide opportunity to talk about family concerns, to plan for celebrations and vacations, to decide on and divide up chores. Start with words of affection and praise. Encourage discussion and decisions that everyone can live with.
- **For family members separated by distance, start a family round-robin.** Write a few paragraphs and send it to a family member who will add a few paragraphs and send it on to the next family member and so on.

Continued on next page

- **Practice give and take.** Learn to communicate your own thoughts and feelings clearly and take responsibility for them. Listen carefully to others without becoming defensive. Accept and respect their thoughts and feelings.

- **Keep trying.** Turn off the TV, put down the newspaper and remove any other distractions when you are trying to communicate or when someone else is trying to communicate with you. When you feel overwhelmed, take time to calm down by counting to 10, leaving the room or going for a walk. Set a time to continue the discussion later.

These suggestions may seem like good old common sense—and they are. But families under stress—which includes all of our families at some time—do not automatically function with good sense. Often we need reminders of how to rebuild our broken bridges and make them strong.

- **Make times for sharing.** For Christian families, the bridge we have with God and with the church can also help us build bridges among family members. Why not observe a daily time of sharing a Bible reading and prayer. One college student tells me that his family always shares a short devotional around the supper table—a practice he looks forward to whenever he is home from college. "The family that prays together stays together" may be a cliche, but it also has some truth: When we pray, in addition to including God in our concerns, we communicate, and when we communicate we strengthen the bonds between us.

- **Offer family life classes.** Churches can help families improve their communication by offering Sunday school classes on family life. My congregation invited resource people from a local Christian counseling center for a series on strengthening families. People responded well to the topical approach and appreciated the teaching and experience of those working in the field.

Another congregation held a Sunday morning session on blended families led by a husband and wife team. Since their own family was blended, and since he was also a trained therapist, they could discuss both the professional and the personal dimensions of their experience.

- **Provide support.** A congregation may also be able to help if communication breaks down within a family. Several years ago the congregation I now serve developed its own statement on divorce and remarriage, including provision for a care team. If a couple experiences difficulty in its relationship, one or both partners may request assistance of a team consisting of the pastor and two or more caring individuals from the congregation. In this way couples and families may find support from others in rebuilding personal relationships.

As we seek to build bridges of communication and love within our families, we know that we do not build alone. Instead, we are part of a churchwide, worldwide community of families with similar concerns and similar hopes for healthy family life. Instead of isolation, may we continue to build bridges within our families, ministering to one another, for "God sets the lonely in families" (Psalm 68:6, NIV).

April Yamasaki is pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Clearbrook, B.C. April has authored many articles and two books: *Where Two Are Gathered: Readings for Shared Devotions* and *Remember Lot's Wife and Other Unnamed Women of the Bible*.

Family ties renewed

by Helga Warkentin Froese

Building bridges within the family became vitally important when Lina entered our lives. Lina's story goes back to the mid-1920s in Russia:

The Mennonites in Russia had lived in peace and prosperity, enjoyed freedom of religion, ran their own German schools and governed their own affairs. But times were becoming difficult after World War I as Russia rocked with internal conflicts and revolution. In the 1920s many Mennonites began planning to immigrate to Canada, for the doors were open and other Mennonites had already paved the way when they came in the 1870s. There was religious freedom and vast regions of land were available for homesteading.

The Warkentins, my mother's family, decided to seek a new life in Canada. However, leaving their once comfortable estate was not without pain. The eldest daughter, Anna, and her young teacher husband remained behind to wait out the hard times.

Canadian pioneer life was difficult and poverty was acute but the family was free to worship God. Daily there were prayers of thanksgiving for freedom in their adopted land and pleas for the relatives in Russia. Anna and her family tried desperately to leave Russia but the doors were closed. The Iron Curtain hung heavily, dividing the family. A few letters from Anna got through telling of a difficult life and their continued faith in God. These letters were circulated among the family in Canada.

Anna was allowed to make one memorable trip to Canada in the 1960s to visit all her siblings. She was able to experience for a few months the peace and prosperity told of in the letters.

About 20 years ago Anna's youngest daughter, Mariechen, underwent surgery for a brain tumor. Complications caused severe physical and mental disabilities. Because of this unfortunate development Mariechen's husband was allowed to take her and their large family of 14 children (seven boys and seven girls) and immigrate to Germany.

The family then faced a dilemma. Mariechen, now an invalid herself, could no longer care for her children. The youngest children needed care, the oldest needed immediate employment

Continued on next page

to help the family survive and the rest of the children needed to be in school. The father tried to keep his family together, seeking help from family, friends and the church. After a few years, out of desperation, he brought in a housekeeper to care for the children and the invalid mother.

Because Mariechen was not able to communicate after the brain surgery, her stories of the past and of her family were lost to the children. They didn't know their mother's family and were unaware of relatives living in Canada.

Late last fall Mennonite Central Committee contacted our family to host another International Visitor Exchange Program trainee for the February-July 1995 term. We were given a brief description of Lina by phone. We were told she had no known relatives in North America. But my excitement rose as the answers to my questions matched the sketchy information we had of Mariechen's daughter Lina. For in the summer we had learned from visiting relatives, recent immigrants from Russia to Germany, that Mariechen's youngest daughter, Lina, was somewhere in Canada, although they didn't know where or under what program. Out of all the possible trainees and out of all the possible host families, we had found her! And we would now be privileged to host her in our home!

Lina Sawadsky (l) and Helga Froese. Helga is from Steinbach, Man., and currently serves as vice president of Canadian Women in Mission.

On our way home on the day I picked Lina up at the bus station, she asked if I had an interest in genealogy, since MCC personnel had mentioned that I believed we were related. I told her why I was pretty sure we were. After a few side glances, Lina, visibly touched, said "There is a striking resemblance between you and my mother."

And so Lina has become part of our family. We have shared our stories—some very painful, some funny. We have talked late into the night. I have been able to tell her stories of her family her mother was never able to share. We laugh about our likes and dislikes and whenever they match, it's certainly because we are related.

Other family ties have been renewed. Addresses have been shared and invitations to visit extended. Warkentin cousins have gathered to meet Lina. Through God's providence we have been brought together, and now through God's grace we are building bridges within our widespread family.

How does God see it?

by Jeanne Rempel

As I sat down to look at the book Em offered, I was aware of the toll that Parkinson's disease had taken on him. He was eager for me to see the book of the building of the Oakland (Calif.) Bay Bridge because he had been one of the daring young men who built it. He was rightfully proud of what they had done. That bridge still stands, a testament to the dreamers, designers and builders who committed themselves to that work of building a bridge.

If only I had a "coffee-table book" that would tell the story of the bridges we've built in our family. To see that I had produced a strong bridge would bring me much comfort and reassurance, especially during stormy interactions with a preadolescent and teenagers, with one looking to leave for college this fall. But there wasn't a book on the Oakland Bay Bridge until after it was finished, and there is not yet a book for me.

So I am thick into the task, and as I share with my friends across the age spectrum, I observe that the bridge building in families never gets finished in a lifetime. The mother of an adult son with a vindictive ex-wife must keep working on a bridge to her increasingly inaccessible grandson. Another mother finds herself parenting her grandson when her daughter and son-in-law are unable to parent. And even if one's own children are on their own and doing well, the bridges need inspection and maintenance. Further, nieces and nephews need bridges built to them to strengthen the connections within a family striving to be faithful to Christ.

Building my family bridges has required more than I ever considered as a young woman, but the excitement and rewards have also been greater than expected. I never anticipated how much love I could hold and give. I never knew I could be so proud. And I never knew how fearful I could be for my children and that pain, though muted now, could at times feel like more than I could bear.

I want to give you this message: We each have bridges to build which require our unique talents, gifts and perspectives. Our bridge is as important as if there were no other bridge to build. That is how God sees it, regardless of our vision. May each of you experience the Architect's plan and care and oversight as you build your bridges.

Jeanne Rempel, WM president, lives in Upland, Calif., with her husband and three children. Peace Fellowship in Upland is their church home.

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Women i
COMMITTED TO CHRIS

Carmen Miniño reading Scripture in Mexico City

Jubilee Anabaptist curriculum for future generations

Women supporting women

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WM discerns women's gifts leadership anc local church, and the world.

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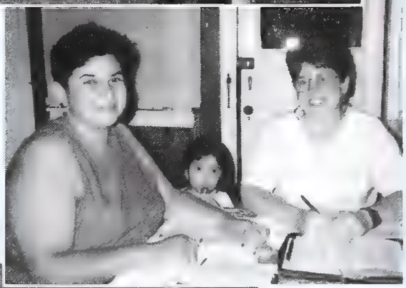
Hispanic church leadership training



Bible training in Spanish

Witnessing in Mexico City

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The work of encouragement

by Julie Dale, writing for the Commission on Home Ministries

It's my night to do dishes here at 9 Bannock, the Denver Mennonite Voluntary Service house. Standing over a sink full of dishes spilling over onto the countertops I start my last duty of the day. I realize what a luxurious life I lead. How would I feel if I stood over that sink piled high every night after cooking, cleaning, changing diapers, helping with homework, supervising after-school play and nurturing a couple of preschoolers? This is the life of many of the single women I've grown to know the last year and a half through my work at Inter-Faith Task Force in Englewood, Colo.

How would I survive as a single woman with small children? How would I handle the stress of living on an income that barely pays my rent and leaves me without money for utilities and food? How would I deal with the struggles of being alone, dealing with emotions from past abusive relationships? Would I be able to cope with the stress of never seeing a way out of poverty, let alone a way to the grocery store since my car has permanently broken down?

Stress and pain engulf the lives of so many families I know. How can I support the women who struggle to make a life for their children? Mennonite Voluntary Service has brought me from a life experience of two parents, more than enough money to pay the bills and get a college education, to the very humbling experience of being helper for these families. I've found the greatest help I can lend these families is encouragement. Encouragement keeps hope alive—hope for an easier time ahead and a prosperous future for their children.

Encouragement can be helping them obtain food and clothing or financial assistance at our center. Encouragement can be fun, inspiring activities that allow them some time away from their children a few hours a week. Many of us get together for an aerobics class each week. A special class for those who are learning English also adds to the hope of those who feel isolated and discouraged in our culture. The center's free preschool program says, "I believe in you, your children and your future!" This message is vital!

A listening ear and an encouraging response are vitally important in keeping hope alive. We all need encouragement to cope with life. I know some women who desperately need encouragement though they continue to astound me with their strength to hope and their power to change. Taking an extra few minutes to look into a woman's eyes and hear her does make a difference. Encouragement is an authentic contribution.

Julie Dale, from Colorado Springs, Colorado, is completing her MVS term in Denver. While in Denver Julie has attended First Mennonite Church.

Jubilee and the family

by Eleanor Snyder, writing for the Commission on Education

Who is ultimately responsible for nurturing the faith of children? Christian parents and educators are beginning to question the value of our Sunday school system. Is it time to find another model?

Researchers have shown how important the Christian home and the church's Christian education program are in shaping faith. How can we build bridges between the church and home in order to strengthen the teaching capabilities of parents? **Jubilee: God's Good News**, our new children's curriculum, has attempted this with its take-home student pieces. A "Note to Parents" encourages a home connection by offering suggestions for follow-up activities. Parents would do well to have a check-in time on Sunday afternoons in which children retell the story, share their take-home pieces and have the family do an activity together.

Are we ready to try a more radical approach to "faithing" our children? I suggest that the church give the responsibility for nurturing faith in children back to the parents. Let's make the home the classroom for growing faith with the parents as primary teachers. And let's have the church provide the parents with training skills, support and encouragement to help them be the "passers-on of the faith."

In my wildest dreams, I imagine this scenario: **It's Sunday morning and:**

THE CHILDREN are milling around and talking excitedly. Some have brought pictures, others have interesting creations that beg for explanations, still others have videotapes to show. They have spent time each day reviewing the Bible story and doing one response activity. Now they are ready to share what they learned about God during their **Jubilee** sessions at home.

THE PARENTS are in Sunday School, poring over the Bible text for the next Jubilee session. Each week a leader/guide gives them background information on the session text and they talk about its meaning for them as adult Christians. Using the Teacher's Guide they plan for the coming week. They end with a time of sharing, prayer and mutual encouragement. They leave, empowered to learn the story, pray and spend quality nurture time with their children every day during the week. And they are confident that they have the support and help they need from the church community.

This is one possible way to practice a home-based **Jubilee** nurture ministry. I see great potential in such a ministry in which the church's role is primarily to nurture the faith of the parents so they have the support, skills, biblical base and faith maturity to share God's good news when they are at home, when they are away, in the morning and at night, from infancy through adolescence.

Come, dream with me. What are other ways we can strengthen the church-home connection in our intent to enable parents to be positive Christian models?

Eleanor Snyder is director of children's education for COE. She and her husband, Stuart, live in Kitchener, Ont., and are members of Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

God's promises are true

by Carmen Miniño, writing for the Commission on Overseas Mission translated by Harriet Rutschman

The assurance of being able to raise up a church for God comes from God. If God does not uphold us, the plan cannot be carried out. Strength does not come from ourselves but from God.

We need God's strengthening when our sons Joel and Jonah undergo harsh treatment at the hands of their schoolmates. Although we are Spanish-speaking, we are recognized here in Mexico as foreigners, and this has been the excuse for their mistreatment. In one incident Jonah was pushed down and walked on by other students. In a separate incident Joel was spat upon, hit and his glasses stolen by students. At times the boys feel they cannot continue, remembering their old schools in the Dominican Republic and longing to at least be able to attend a different school. At those times we accept the comfort the Lord offers in John 16:33 "In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!" It is only because we are sure that God is with us (Isaiah 41:10) that we can proclaim God's message even under conditions where we sob and weep.

In Mexican society people live with deep hurts and frustrations stemming from the social system. The relationship between men and women comes out of a long history that includes the Spanish conquest during which native women were sexually abused, and the appearance of the "mestizo" (half breed).

Over time a system has developed in which many Mexican men are irresponsible toward their families, engaging in coarse speech, being boastful and quarrelsome, frequently abandoning their families. Many Mexican women adopt a role of being self-sacrificing and neglected. Children brought up in this situation perpetuate this dysfunctional system.

We realize that the Mexicans are deeply hurt by the social conditions under which they must live. Through prayer and seeking help through the Word of God, we find ourselves more firmly united with them, even as we struggle with the victimization experienced by our sons.

At times my husband, Vicente, and I feel that we should go to the school and talk with the directors in order to achieve better conditions, or perhaps not send the boys to school for a few days in order that together we might be encouraged and strengthened to continue the struggle.

In the midst of these trials we feel that God has not abandoned us, that his promises continue faithfully. This fills us with courage and faith to continue the work that we are called to do, sometimes in the midst of sobs and tears.

Carmen Miniño and her husband, Vicente, from the Dominican Republic, now live in Mexico City and are involved in church planting with COM.

Roundtable

Stepping stones

by Marian B. Hostetler, Women's Missionary and Service Commission Executive Secretary

Below our house in Swaziland was the shortcut path to town. Using this path meant risking the primitive bridge of stepping stones to cross the narrow Polinjane River. During dry season even the clumsy-footed crossed easily, but when the rains came, water rushing from the mountains above swirled rapidly around those boulders and rocks. During the rainy season it took a brave heart to risk a misstep and end up with a wet foot, or worse.

Those stepping stones speak to me of interaction between WM and WMSC, or more broadly between the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. Some of us take that path so often our feet fit exactly on the right spot on the boulder each time. Some have even learned to run across and barely notice the swirling water. However, at some spots it's hard for anyone to find stepping stones. They are so far upstream or downstream it hardly seems worth the effort. In a few places some rough waters actually cover the stones and hide them from view. But a helper has stretched a rope across, offering security to the hesitant. In the distance we see a permanent structure being erected, so that both sides have easy access and interchange in all kinds of weather.

Probably each of us can fit our own experience somewhere into this stepping stone analogy. While writing this article I learned of the death of J.C. Wenger, beloved storyteller, church leader and historian. Reflecting on his gifts to me, I remembered again the impact of his Mennonite history class in my first year at Goshen College. He clarified and broadened my concept of a Mennonite people—my people—and they included you and your stories! I thank God for that first stepping stone which was a solid rock from which to take many other steps. We are family!

Marian Hostetler is in her eighth year as WMSC executive secretary. Marian and her husband, Darrel, served in Nigeria and Swaziland. They now live in Goshen, Ind. Marian is moderator-elect of Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference.

Facts & figures

by Susan Jantzen

Susan Jantzen, WM coordinator, lives in Newton, Kan., with her husband, Jim, and two sons. New Creation Fellowship, Newton, is their church home.

WICHITA '95: July 25-30 Wichita, Kan.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you this summer! Photos and news from this conference will be shared in our Fall *Window*. We realize that due to distance and expense many of you will not be able to be attend.

Thank you to each group who sent in the ballots for General Conference Women in Mission. Results will be announced at the WM/WMSC business meeting at Wichita '95 on Friday, July 28, and printed in the fall issue of *Window to Mission.*

Wichita '95

Here are WM events:

- **WM/WMSC joint open forum**, noon-2:00 p.m., Thursday, July 27, "Questions about Women's Groups"
- **Women's dinner**, 5:15-7:00 p.m., Thursday, July 27. Esther Kunjam from India will speak on "Called into God's Family." Offering: Mennonite World Conference Travel Fund (after our dinner expenses are met).
- **WM/WMSC joint delegate business session**, noon-2:00 p.m., Friday, July 28. Offering: WM/WMSC
- **WM's five-minute report to General Assembly** at 3:00 p.m., Saturday, July 29.

The WM display booth will be set up right next to the WMSC booth. Come and meet WM officers, purchase copies of the new study guide on Ruth, *Called into God's Family*, or *Gems from the Files*, a collection of program ideas from the WM files.

There is ***limited seating*** at the Thursday evening women's banquet because of room size. Tickets are granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Check your registration confirmation information to see if you're in. Sadly, this will not allow women to drive in just for the meal.

Called into God's Family

Campbell's soup labels continue to be requested by Hopi Mission School. Send to Hopi Mission School, P.O. Box 39, Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039.

Due to the exchange rate, giving from Canadian women to General Conference Women in Mission appears to shrink dramatically in our Newton office year-end reports. In reality, the U.S. value of Canadian dollars is reported while the money actually stays in Winnipeg. It is used to support costs for projects paid out in Canada. Money is transferred to the United States for project support as needed.

1996 Elections

The General Conference Women in Mission (GCWM) nominating committee is seeking nominees for president of GCWM (needs to be Canadian), secretary of GCWM executive (needs to be U.S.) and members of publications committee (needs to be U.S.). We welcome names of women who have time, leadership skills and vision for women's groups as they are now and for what they can become. Travel to two meetings a year is required, expenses are paid.

Pray about women in your area who might serve in this way. Send names and information by **Aug. 31** to one of the nominating committee members:

Edna Zacharias (past Canadian representative, Saskatchewan)
Box 176
Osler, SK S0K 3A0
Canada
(306) 239-4620

Sue Kehler (WM president in British Columbia)
P.O. Box 867
Sumas, WA 98295
(604) 852-5860

Joann Philipp (past president of former Pacific District WM)
465 Countryside Circle
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
(707) 579-4070

Window shopping

NEW BIBLE STUDY PROVIDES BIBLICAL TEACHING ABOUT FAMILY

In July WM and WMSC groups will receive copies for the first year of a new two-year study theme on ***The Household of God.*** In year one's devotional study—*Called Into God's Family*—the focus will be on the Book of Ruth.

The story of Naomi and Ruth is an example of how the community of faith grows and includes people of all races, nations and languages. This community is not called into being for its own sake, but exists for mission.

Each lesson includes personal testimonies, guidelines for group leaders and worship suggestions. Organizational information, litanies and an Easter program are also part of the booklet.

Additional copies ($4 U.S./$5 Cdn.) can be ordered from the WM office, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100.

Suzanne Lawrence, free-lance writer, poet and homemaker, is the writer of *Called Into God's Family.*

Suzanne has participated in a variety of groups for women's Bible study, nurture and mission. Since 1990 Suzanne has served on the WM publications committee and currently teaches a women's Sunday school class at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church in Goessel, Kan. Suzanne, her husband Kurt and their four children make their home in Goessel.

The **China Educational Exchange study tour Sept. 28-Oct. 15** will provide opportunity for a glimpse of the emerging church in China and CEE's work. Todd Friesen, CEE teacher, widely traveled and fluent in Chinese, will lead the tour. Estimated cost is $3,000 which includes airfare, in-China transportation, lodging, all meals and entrance fees to tourist sights. For information or to apply for the tour contact Larry Kehler, Commission on Overseas Mission secretary for Asia, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P OM4; (204) 888-6781.

The **Mennonite Educator's Conference,** July 24-25 in Wichita, Kan., is for educators in elementary and secondary public, private and church schools. With over 20 seminars, worship services, a concert, workshops and a special technology event, there will be much to choose from. Registration fee is $115 Cdn, $88 U.S. For information contact Orville Yoder, Mennonite Board of Education, P.O. Box 1142, Elkhart, IN 46515-1142; (219) 294-7523.

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt

News

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Leaders hold historic meeting in Moscow

Moscow (MCC)—Leaders of Mennonite agencies met in Moscow for the first time since before World War II. Some 40 people met at an inter-Mennonite consultation May 7-10.

Although North American Mennonites from agencies working in the former Soviet Union have consulted since 1978, this was the first time they met in Russia with Russian partners shaping the context.

Peter Rempel of the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church opened the meeting with Hebrews 10:19-24, the same Scripture used at the last Moscow gathering, the "Martyrs' Conference of 1925." After that gathering many church leaders were put to death under Stalin's persecution.

Of the May meeting Walter Sawatsky reports, "It was amazing that those Mennonite workers able to communicate in Russian were already understood in more than a simple linguistic sense, while Russians who had spoken no English a year or two ago now addressed us in passable English." Sawatsky is Mennonite Central Committee East/West consultant.

"The most obvious conclusion: Any serious ministry in this vast country requires learning Russia's language and culture," he writes. "Yet paradoxically, the North American missionary invasion … has forced the 'natives' to learn the imperial language—English."

Downscaled dreams: The consultation's tone was noticeably muted compared with the confident voices only four or five years ago calling for big visions and budgets. Some of those big programs have come and gone. Others have become more established, such as schools in St. Petersburg and Lithuania, and a radio ministry based in a Moscow studio. As late as 1990 there had still been a vision for growth and expansion of the Soviet Mennonite churches. These meetings were now an opportunity to take stock.

Listening to the rehearsal of Menno-

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Time out: *Church administrators in Moscow take time out from meetings to join children in the "chicken dance" at Tomeleno Shelter for Street Children. Adults at right, from back to front, are Mikhail Zhidkov, director of the Moscow-based Compassion Ministries; Walter Bergen, Mennonite Central Committee country co-representative in the former Soviet Union, and shelter director Irina Abramova. Compassion Ministries, a Russian Baptist organization, supports the shelter with material assistance, with some provided by MCC. The shelter cares for more than 50 abused or abandoned children.*

Inside the news

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Media friendly to Mennonites, despite misconceptions / p. 16

Three young adults critique church / p. 17

AMBS sees shift in leadership, cuts budget / p. 18

Canadian in Africa finds more than poverty / p. 19

Pastor Howard Wagler bungee jumped his way to a new church computer this spring. The South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite pastor raised $2,000 in pledges for the jump. (*Gospel Herald*)

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The Defense Budget Project estimates that nearly $14 billion will be spent from the 1995 U.S. federal budget for the weapons-acquisition segment of the "Black Budget." Each federal budget since World War II has contained a percentage of military spending for secret weapons programs, clandestine operations and covert funds. This spending, called the Black Budget, is so top secret that neither the public nor the members of Congress know how this money is spent. DBP, a nonpartisan research organization, also reports that additional billions will be spent on operating funds for military-related organizations such as the National Security Agency and the National Reconnaissance Office. Still more Black Budget funding is in the Pentagon's operations and maintenance, military personnel and military construction accounts. The Black Budget originated with the Manhattan Project that developed the atomic bomb. (*National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund*)

The Wichita '95 Youth Convention office is encouraging Mennonite young people to contribute to a fund that will help other youth attend the joint gathering of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church in Wichita, Kan., July 25-30. Groups are encouraged to send 10 percent of the money they raised for Wichita '95 to the scholarship fund at the Youth Convention Office, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245.

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The board of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., cut two senior administration positions at meetings on April 20. The positions of director of development (Gloria Eby) and the vice president of administration (Ron Sawatsky) were terminated May 1. Most of the tasks will be reassigned internally. "I want to emphasize it is not a competence issue; it is a downsizing issue," said board chair Andrew Reesor-McDowell. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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***The Mennonite* received three honorable mentions from the Associated Church Press: for Poetry, "In the City at Twenty" by Suzanne Lawrence (May 24, 1994, issue); for Personally Useful Article, "When Bad Fights Happen in Good Churches" by Larry Penner (Aug. 23, 1994, issue); and for Magazine Cover , the Sept. 13, 1994, issue, "The Plight of Children," by John Hiebert. *Gospel Herald* received an Award of Merit from ACP for Feature Article, "An Ode to the Song of Songs" by anonymous writers. *With* magazine received two awards from the Evangelical Press Association: third place for First-Person Article, "No One Can Ever Know" by Greg Hatcher; and fourth place for Poetry, "Faith" by Lela Maria De La Garza. *Mennonite Reporter* received two honorable mentions from the Canadian Church Press April 25. One for Opinion Article by Conrad Brunk, "Mercy Killing: a Christian Response," and one for Original Artwork by Heidi Strack-Richter on the front page of the March 21, 1994, issue.**

nite program efforts was "like hearing competing tunes without much symphony of sounds," writes Sawatsky. Program efforts ranged from relief shipments to Moldova, to radio work, camping programs, small business training, sponsorship of teachers, student scholarships, peacemaking and social work training.

Although some non-Mennonite guests called the group to plant Mennonite churches, the majority of church leaders urged Mennonites to work with, even under, existing denominations, especially the Baptists. The group recognized that with large immigration of Russian Mennonites to Germany, the organized Mennonite church in the former Soviet Union has virtually ceased to exist.

Several evangelical Baptists and one Russian Orthodox guest acknowledged with regret that most active Mennonite Christians had moved to Germany in the past eight years. One Baptist seminary rector said they are now realizing that theologically they feel close to Mennonites. *From a report from Walter Sawatsky*

Six statements go to GCs at Wichita '95

Newton, Kan.—Five statements and a new Confession of Faith will come before General Conference delegates at Wichita '95 in July. The statements address integration with the Mennonite Church, joint GC/MC vision and goals, violence, nuclear weapons and ways of handling conflict. A sixth statement, on care for the poor, may or may not be considered by U.S. delegates.

Integration: The statement on integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church calls the two denominations to "move toward" integration. It asks the two general boards to

- schedule regular meetings to pursue cooperative ministries,
- facilitate integration of programs as feasible,
- propose by 1997 a time frame for integration of the boards and denominational assemblies,
- appoint a new committee to guide and monitor the process of integration.

Vision and Goals: The vision and goals statement seeks to present a vision and priorities for the church as it enters the 21st century. The statement begins with the sentence of vision: "God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world." Six priorities follow:

- to enrich our prayer, worship and study of the Scriptures,
- to offer all that we are and have to God,
- to call and nurture congregational leaders,
- to practice love, forgiveness and hospitality,
- to invite others to faith,
- to seek God's peace in our homes, work, neighborhoods and world.

Statement on Violence: The statement on violence requests the general boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church to appoint a joint committee to prepare a statement on violence in North American society and the appropriate responses of Mennonite Christians. That statement would go to the next delegate assembly of each denomination.

Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love: The agreeing/disagreeing statement comes as counsel from the General Board. The statement outlines steps in thought, action and life to help church members manage conflict. It expounds on the process described in the sentences: "Accept conflict, affirm hope, commit to prayer, go to the other in the spirit of humility. Be quick to listen, be slow to judge, be willing to negotiate. Be steadfast in love, be open to mediation, trust the community, be the Body of Christ."

Resolution on a Jubilee Year of Repentance and Action Regarding Nuclear Weapons: The Jubilee year resolution would declare 1995 a "Jubilee year" in memory of the 1945 nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The resolution calls churches to encourage study about nuclear weapons and calls churches to communicate with the U.S. and Canadian governments to reduce nuclear stockpiles.

Confession of Faith: The Confession of Faith is a 35-page document describing the beliefs of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. Its 24 articles discuss subjects including the nature of God; Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit; Scripture; baptism; the Lord's Supper; ministry and leadership; family, singleness and marriage; peace, justice and nonresistance.

Care for the Poor: The statement on care for the poor was to go to U.S. delegates at Wichita. With the Mennonite Church executive committee's decision not to present the statement to MC delegates, the General Conference is reconsidering whether it should present the proposal to its delegates. The main concerns are time and fear of an overfull agenda. The statement, adopted by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. in February, would call churches to assist the needy and advocate to government for those who are needy.

All of the statements except the agreeing/disagreeing statement have been mailed to churches. Copies of the agreeing/disagreeing statement are available from the General Board Office, General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. *Larry Penner*

MDS responds to 'silent flood'

Akron, Pa. (MDS)—An early May flood in New Orleans was too "quick and clean" to garner media attention, but some 30,000 homes were left damaged (at an estimated cost of $3 billion U.S.).

Mennonite Disaster Service is planning to help disaster victims there for at least the next four months.

MDS is one of the few agencies responding to the "silent flood" and is thus receiving more requests for help than usual.

"We don't see homes floating down the river like we did in the Midwest, but 10,000 of the affected homes received 24 inches or more of water," says Rick Augsburger, MDS assistant coordinator. "The rain water went up and down so quickly that no mud or water lines were left and you have to get into the homes to see the damage."

Augsburger thinks the flood's swiftness accounts for the lack of media coverage. "The media couldn't get the dramatic shots they like," he says. Without widespread public awareness of the disaster, he says, MDS is having difficulty finding enough volunteers and funding.

MDS is working with "Amor Viviente," a Honduran church associated with the Gulf States Mennonite Fellowship. Amor Viviente has offered MDS its upper floor as headquarters. "MDS will be assisting Hispanic members of the community as well as others, especially elderly and poor people and people with disabilities," Augsburger says. Later, satellite offices may also be opened.

MDS is receiving volunteer groups that will primarily replace wallboard and paneling. "There's a lot of work to do," Augsburger says.

Short-term volunteers should phone the MDS office in New Orleans to

Work to do: *Mennonite Disaster Service assistant coordinator Rick Augsburger inspects flood damage beneath stripped-out wallboard in a New Orleans home.*

Tom Smucker (MDS)

More than 200 evangelicals and Orthodox religious leaders have endorsed a "Cry for Renewal." The statement asks politicians to "listen to the voices of religion rather than seeking to manipulate them," says Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners* magazine. "The religious right has been such a strong and singular media voice ... that even the word Christian has become associated with a particular brand of very conservative Republican politics," Wallis says. The group plans to form a caucus to present different points of view to the media. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Singer Amy Grant has donated $45,000 toward a service project at Wichita '95, the July 25-30 convention of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. The project hopes to build 20 new homes for low-income and working families with the help of volunteers and donations. Recipients of the houses pay for their houses over a period of time. Grant is a longtime sponsor of Habitat for Humanity International. She heard about the Wichita, Kan., service project during a February concert in Wichita. Her contribution represents the cost of building one home.

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Schlockey, a game invented by students of a Waterloo County Mennonite teacher in the 1950s, is making a comeback. Students invented the game when their teacher collared four students roughhousing at hockey and kept them at school until they had designed a less violent game, played with hockey sticks and a puck, with no bodychecking and playable by both sexes. Schlockey was the result. The game was reintroduced throughout the Waterloo region in 1989 and has become something of a craze. Played in a 4 foot by 8 foot wooden "arena," two opposing players use bladeless sticks to try to shoot a puck through an opposing goal (an opening in the boundary). The next player in line replaces the loser when a goal is scored. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

Participants of a Peacemaker Congress in Chicago held a memorial service May 29 at the site of the first sustained nuclear chain reaction. More than 100 people in 21 cars traveled in a funeral motorcade 14 miles from the North Side neighborhood of Uptown to the University of Chicago. At the site, worshipers created a cemetery of white crosses and grave markers in memory of the victims of war and violence. The conference, drawing 225 people, was supported by Christian Peacemaker Teams and New Call to Peacemaking. Participants included Mennonites, Quakers and Church of the Brethren members.

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A group of Wichita, Kan., kindergartners sent nine teddy bears in small backpacks on journeys with random travelers at the Wichita airport in February. Each backpack contained a journal to tell the bear's story. One bear, Blueberry, left with Larry Nikkel, director of member services for Mennonite Health Services. Blueberry joined J.B. Miller, executive director of Mennonite Foundation, for many trips, visiting Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, in Virginia, and the beach at Sarasota, Fla. With Paul Brunk, Mennonite Mutual Aid's Southeast regional sales manager, and Joyce, his wife, Blueberry traveled to Thailand and Japan. In Harrisonburg, Va., Blueberry went with Glen Kauffman's son to school. With Kauffman, Mennonite Foundation representative in Harrisonburg, Blueberry traveled to Pittsburgh, and from there returned to Kansas with Steve Pankratz, who works with Mennonite Foundation in Hesston, Kan. Kathleen Kremer of Wichita took Blueberry to Oklahoma City, where the bear had his picture taken with a bombing rescue worker and with a TV anchorperson. From there Blueberry returned to College Hill Elementary School, to be reunited with the kindergartners. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

schedule their time. The phone number is (504) 834-3100. People interested in longer-term work of at least two months should contact MDS headquarters in Akron, Pa., at (717) 859-3889. Funds may be sent to MDS, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, designated for "Gulf States Floods."

Robed pastors fend off violence in Nigeria

Jos, Nigeria (MCC/AMBS)—Fifty-some pastors preached peace to a community where 50 people were killed in a land dispute.

The violence between the Mwaghavul and Ron ethnic groups here in May came after years of peaceful coexistence and intermarriage. On the sixth day of the fighting Obed Dashan and some 50 other church leaders donned their pastoral robes and went to the troubled area.

"I went because of my peace perspective; otherwise, I wouldn't have gotten involved," explains Dashan. He earned a Master of Divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., in 1990. "The police were there with guns, but they could not go to the people calmly and lovingly."

The pastors found homes deserted, granaries in flames and villages destroyed. They also saw five dead bodies.

"We went to 15 sites and listened and spoke to both sides. We listened to their pain and anger. We encouraged them to put their anger into words, not fists and guns," says Dashan.

On the day the pastors visited the area, both sides were preparing for a confrontation. It never happened. Dashan feels it may not have been the words they said but seeing 50 pastors in black robes was enough to make the combatants stop and think.

"The presence of the pastors saved us from killing ourselves," said one man. "We became aware we were not thinking for ourselves but just following the crowd."

The fighting has now stopped and many people are returning to the churches, repenting of their actions. Most people in this area claim to be Christian. In fact, the ethnic groups involved in the fighting are members of the same church—the Church of Christ of Nigeria.

Dashan and other pastors have held a first teaching session on peace; pastors from both ethnic groups attended. The pastors plan to continue their peacemaking efforts by developing a series on peace for church leaders.

Although the fighting has stopped, the land dispute is not resolved. Dashan is working to prevent violence from escalating again after an upcoming government ruling on the land.

"Please pray for the restoration of peace, that we will understand the concept that Christ has made us into one tribe. Pray that our church will begin to seriously discuss issues of peace and make it part of the curriculum for training pastors," he says.

Dashan is writing a handbook on cross-tribal ministry that includes a chapter on peace theology, a theme he also incorporates into the courses he teaches at Gindiri Theological College.

Dashan's wife, Phena, earned a master of arts in theological studies from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in 1991. Mennonite Central Committee sponsored the couple's studies. The Dashans are both teaching and pastoring in Plateau State, sharing their passion for peace. They are members of the Church of Christ in Nigeria. *Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi*

Media view of Mennonites positive despite misconceptions

Harrisonburg, Va. (MBM)—Buggies, capes, earrings, cow manure sculptures, a woman who helps run a contracting business, relief sales, four shirtless "hunks." All these images had the word "Mennonite" attached to them in some way in the U.S. press from Sept. 15 to Dec. 15, 1994.

To gain a comprehensive picture of the press's treatment of Mennonites, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) Media Ministries subscribed to a national clipping bureau with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The bureau combed approximately 17,000 periodicals for any mention of the word Mennonite.

MBM staff analyzed a total of 322 clips from the three-month period. A little over half (177 stories) consisted of positive/desirable mentions. One-fifth (68 stories) were traditional (farm, food, culture) mentions. One-tenth (30 stories) were unusual kinds of mentions, like an article in *Money* comparing the benefits of public vs. private schools that mentioned a Mennonite salutatorian at a Catholic prep school.

"The images were slightly more positive and the writers more informed than we expected," says Kenneth J. Weaver, director of Media Ministries. In 1989 Media Ministries conducted research that revealed over 80 percent of people surveyed had wrong or very limited understandings of who Mennonites are. "We hope that the passage of time and some of the positive media efforts debunking prevalent myths about Mennonites have contributed to the press doing a better job," he says.

The high number of positive mentions may in part be attributed to many articles regarding MCC relief sales and Self-Help stores, notes Melodie Davis, project director. Twenty-five percent (81) of the articles catalogued were MCC-related stories.

The media: What's a church to do?

Harrisonburg, Va. (MBM)—Jurg Rindlisbacher, a Mennonite journalist from Switzerland studying at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, helped analyze the findings (see story at left). He recommends that churches "fill the media with positive stories and correct images" rather than spend a lot of energy correcting incorrect portrayals of Mennonites.

He also says congregations can help create more accurate stories in the press by creating prepared information for the press before an event or possible story.

"Churches should know the particular values of their own local paper. What kinds of stories does the local paper publish? Some values that the press looks for are timeliness, out of the ordinary, prominence, human interest," he says. Churches can benefit from free "objective" publicity and should be constantly looking at people, ministries and events from the press's perspective, Rindlisbacher says.

Young adults voice some cynicism about the church

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Greg Awad Lobe doesn't want to be pegged as a cynic. While he feels there are "many Mennonites who have integrity," he also finds it difficult to be optimistic about the state of the Mennonite church in North America.

"Sometimes the church here seems more like a social club. People generally want to go along with the way the church has always been. Are we living what we are supposed to believe? Do we really speak our minds or have we let apathy settle in?" he asked in a phone interview.

> **"Sometimes it seems like the churches are too close-minded; they are still trying to apply traditional ways to new situations."**
>
> ***Paul Reimer***

Lobe was one of three young adults from Ontario who expressed their opinions about the Mennonite church during a panel discussion entitled "Finding Our Voices" at the Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat Center, New Hamburg, Ont.

The discussion was part of a May 11-14 meeting of the Young Adult Reference Council and the Young Adult Network, which represent the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, respectively.

Paul Reimer said his experiences with Central American churches have made him more critical of North American churches: "In El Salvador, the people were actively involved in leading the worship services. They were excited about their faith.

"In North America, church is more of a habit. It is a small part of our lives. We go to church on Sunday, but there are a lot of distractions the rest of

The Foundation for New Era Philanthropy filed for bankruptcy May 15 with assets of $80 million and debts of $551 million. New Era asked nonprofits to deposit funds, promising to double their money. Christian organizations gave money, believing their money would be matched by anonymous donors. Messiah College, a Brethren in Christ school in Grantham, Pa., had $2 million with New Era. Other clients included Billy Graham's Evangelistic Association, Campus Crusade for Christ and World Vision. (*Gospel Herald*)

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Four Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) seniors received Thresher Awards for exemplary achievements May 12. Marike Janzen of Newton, Kan., received an award in English and language. Valerie Schrag of Smithville, Ohio, received an award in social science. Michelle Roth of Hesston, Kan., received an award in music, and Sandra Moshier received an award in social work practice.

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Christian Peacemaker Teams is sending a team to the West Bank city of Hebron for four months, beginning this month. The team will live in Palestinian neighborhoods adjacent to Israeli settlements. Residents of the neighborhoods suffer frequent harassment by settlers and by the Israeli Defense Force.

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A March of Faith and Resistance will be held July 28 at Wichita '95, the joint conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. Walkers will pray and enact a ritual at several sites symbolic of injustice in the community and the world. Buses or vans will drive people unable to walk the approximate two-mile route. Participants will gather at 8:30 a.m. at the A. Price Woodard Park on the west side of Century II Convention Center. Information will be available at the Christian Peacemaker Teams table in the Peace Factory exhibit.

New Hopedale Mennonite Church, Meno, Okla., will celebrate its 100th anniversary July 15-16. Contact the church at (405) 883-5969 for more information.

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The Supportive Congregations Network has recognized 32 Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations as "accepting and publicly affirming" churches. SCN is a network of Mennonite, General Conference Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations that welcome gay, lesbian and bisexual members. Churches can join SCN at one of three levels: accepting congregations, which accept gay, lesbian and bisexual people as full members; publicly affirming congregations, which have a statement of welcome, and exploring congregations, which are discussing the welcome of gay, lesbian and bisexual members. For information, contact SCN at P.O. Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406, (612) 870-1501.

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Three Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) alumni received recognition May 20. Waldo and Lucille Leisy, Wichita, Kan., received Outstanding Alumni Awards and Lawrence Hart, Clinton, Okla., received the Distinguished Achievement Award. Waldo and Lucille Leisy are longtime Bethel supporters. Waldo was active in the printing business and was president and owner of Edwards Typographic Services in Wichita when he retired in 1993. Lucille taught for many years at the grade school and junior high school levels. They were both members of the Bethel College board of directors. Hart, a peace chief of the Cheyenne tribe and a Mennonite minister, also served on the board of directors and has been widely active in both church work and Native American issues.

the time."

In general, both Lobe and Reimer said they think Mennonite churches should ask more questions about the role of Christianity in a culture that promotes consumerism and an individualistic lifestyle.

"We don't spend our money on the church. We use our money to do other things. I think that our wealth is the basic root of the problem," said Reimer.

> **"People generally want to go along with the way the church has always been. Are we living what we are supposed to believe?"**
>
> ***Greg Awad Lobe***

He noted, "A lot of people my age are asking, Do we want to become established in our society just like our parents? It doesn't have to be an all-or-nothing approach. But I think the church community should be a place where we can address the questions we have about lifestyle."

Once Lobe entered the work world, he found it was easy "to swing from social justice toward accumulation." This tendency to become consumer-oriented, among other reasons, has led Lobe and his wife, Tamara Awad, to accept a Mennonite Central Committee position in Egypt beginning in January 1996. "It is a way we can reassert certain priorities," said Lobe, noting that their focus will be on people instead of possessions.

Shrink the church: He thinks that in order for the church to be relevant in the West, it has to be dramatically smaller in terms of the number of members. "Ideally, 25 to 40 people should regularly meet together in homes. It would be a more effective use of buildings and would mean there is less financial focus," said Lobe. "We need to realize that community involves more than Sunday morning."

Lorna Schwartzentruber said she no longer feels like "shaking things up" in the church. "Five years ago, I asked more questions. I have become more tolerant," she said. "I think the church is doing quite well in terms of looking at the current issues. It is changing with the times."

She said she attends her home congregation of Listowel (Ont.) Mennonite Church because "it is a caring, supportive community. Whenever I have a problem, the church is always there for me. They want to know what I'm doing, how I'm doing."

However, Reimer observed that many of his friends don't attend church because they are disillusioned with its structure. He said that some of his friends who go to church simply want to please their parents.

"Many people my age feel like we don't have a voice in church. The world is changing rapidly. Sometimes it seems like the churches are too close-minded; they are still trying to apply traditional ways to new situations," he said. *Carla Reimer*

AMBS sees leadership shifts, cuts budget

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—Shifts in administrative leadership were a major part of the agenda for the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary board meeting June 1-3.

Gerald Gerbrandt, incoming interim president for AMBS, was present to begin his orientation. Gayle Gerber Koontz was recognized for her contribution in the last eight months as acting president. The board also accepted the resignation of Richard A. Kauffman, administrative vice president for the past 11 years, as he anticipates taking the position of associate editor of *Christianity Today* beginning this fall.

The board heard an update of the search for a president. Rick Stiffney, Goshen, Ind., chair of the search committee, reported on the listening process in the two supporting denominations. The committee plans to screen candidates during the summer months.

Budget: In light of strategic planning, the board asked AMBS administration to make cuts in the expense budget for 1996-97. They requested 8.5 percent be cut from the total of 1995-96 expense budget in planning for the following year. This will strengthen the seminary's finances in the immediate future and allow the beginning success of the comprehensive campaign to continue building a base for the longer term. *Mary E. Klassen*

Canadian in Africa finds more than poverty

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (MCC)—As Kristen Linkletter putters through the streets of Ouagadougou on her moped, she passes an occasional turbaned nomad, vendors hawking colorful batik fabric, a goat market and a dance contest in progress.

"Canadians seem to have this image of Africans as always being hungry and needy," says the Waterloo, Ont., native. "Yet when I look around I see that although life is difficult here, people also have good times."

In fact, says Linkletter, since August 1994, when she arrived in this impoverished West African nation that straddles the Sahara Desert, one lesson she has learned is that "you can't generalize about people.

"People in Burkina Faso think Canadians have no problems. They don't realize that some people live on the streets at home," says Linkletter, 23. Linkletter, a member of Emmanuel United Church of Canada in Waterloo, Ont., will complete her assignment this summer.

She works at St. Jean, a private secondary school in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso's capital city. The school has some 245 students, ages 11 to 20. Linkletter is here on a SALT International assignment, a one-year Mennonite Central Committee service and learning program for young adults.

Linkletter lives with an African family in their compound, a situation that took some adjustment—both for her and for her African family.

"It was scary to me to move in with a family and have to depend on them for help with everything. And at first they wanted to know where I was going and when I was coming back," recalls Linkletter. "They were amazed that I would do things by myself. 'Aren't you afraid to be alone?' they would ask."

Difficulty and joy: "Life is tough here. Although Canadians have problems, too, the problems are much different. Some women here have to walk more than 5 kilometers (3 miles) to fetch water for their families," she says. However, she says, the women often use these long walks to chat, to catch up on news about one another's lives, to sing together.

Unemployment is high, perhaps as high as 80 percent in Ouagadougou. Landlocked Burkina Faso has few natural resources.

"I realize as a university-educated Canadian I have so much freedom. Poverty takes away people's choices," says Linkletter.

She recalls showing pictures of Canada to a friend who said he would like to visit someday. "I realized there is no way he could make enough money to get even halfway there," she says.

Linkletter has come to appreciate the slower pace of life in Burkina Faso. "When I first came here my new friends asked me why I was walking so fast," she says. "Now I've learned to saunter—I never did that in Waterloo!" *Pearl Sensenig*

New window on the world: *Kristen Linkletter with students at St. Jean, a private secondary school in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Through Mennonite Central Committee's SALT International program, this year she is teaching English and assisting with clerical work at the school.*

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

In the last 10 years, the U.S. military handed out $13 billion in unaccounted-for funds. No one seems to know where those funds went. The military also spent $6 billion in excess of what Congress authorized it to spend. (*The Washington Post*)

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Sexual abuse cases can cost the church. The Milwaukee archdiocese has spent over $4.88 million to cover the cost of clergy sex-abuse cases, according to Archbishop Rembert M. Weakland. The archdiocese has to cut $800,000 from its central office budget to cover anticipated legal fees for pending cases, he said. He also said payments totaling over $3.9 million for out-of-court settlements have been arranged, with nearly $3.1 million paid by the archdiocese. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Starbucks, one of the leading U.S. gourmet coffee firms, has agreed to establish standards for minimum working conditions and pay at the Guatemalan plantations where it buys coffee. The agreement comes in response to a campaign by the U.S./Guatemala Labor Education Project. (*Sign of the Times*)

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A missionary's son is returning to the Ecuadoran tribe that killed his father 40 years ago. Steve Saint, 44, whose father, Nate, and four other missionaries were killed by the Auca Indians in 1956, said the tribe asked him to help them adjust to 20th-century life. Saint and his family will start a clinic, trading store, mechanic's shop and radio station. Saint says he agreed to help the tribe after the death of his aunt, Rachel Saint, who lived with the Aucas, now known as the Huaoronis, for many years. After the killings, she and Elisabeth Elliot, whose husband, Jim, was also killed, preached the gospel to tribal members. Ten years later, two of the men who killed Nate baptized Steve and his sister. (*Christian Week*)

Record

COM—Commission on Overseas Mission

When asked whether U.S. government spending on welfare should be increased, decreased or kept about the same, 48 percent of respondents in a *New York Times*/CBS News poll said they favored a decrease, and only 13 percent were for an increase. But when asked about government spending on programs for poor children, only 9 percent wanted a decrease, while 47 percent favored an increase. (*Salt of the Earth*)

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New York City's first nonprofit restaurant has opened its doors. One City Cafe serves food-stamp and cash customers. Forty percent of the staff (mostly former shelter residents who hold a high school diploma or GED) are in the cafe's nine-month job-training program. The cafe grew out of 200 hours of interviews with homeless women and children conducted by Ellyn Rosenthal, executive director of the Food & Hunger Hotline. It serves a mix of ethnic dishes including Caribbean, Latin and South American cuisines. (*The Christian Science Monitor*)

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A new family planning law took effect June 1 in China. The law will require all couples planning marriage to undergo comprehensive medical screening. Those who carry genetic conditions may be barred from marrying unless they agree to sterilization. The law also will require doctors to advise women to abort fetuses that show abnormalities in prenatal checks. China does not deny that the law's intent is social engineering. Li Bin says in the Communist Party weekly *Beijing Review* that all of China's family-planning policies—mandating late marriages, restricting families to one child—have been "aimed at improving China's population both in quantity and quality." (*World Press Review*)

DEATHS

Roy W. Henry, Bluffton, Ohio, died May 24 at age 78. Henry was a pastor, naturalist, teacher and writer. He pastored churches in Burrton and Hillsboro, Kan.; Pekin, Ill.; Topeka, Ind., and Wadsworth, Ohio. He wrote a nature column, "Wayside Revelations," for the *Mennonite Weekly Review*, served a term as president of Mennonite Camping Association and directed the outdoor education center at Bluffton College.

Henry

MINISTERS

Amy Babcock is a summer intern in the Ministry Inquiry Program, serving at Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Stan Bohn is resigning as pastor at Shalom Church, Newton, Kan. He and Anita, his wife, will serve with Mennonite Central Committee in Jamaica beginning January 1996.

Richard Davis will be pastor at Peace Church, Dallas, Texas, beginning July 1.

Mike Dean is summer pastoral intern at West Zion Church, Moundridge, Kan.

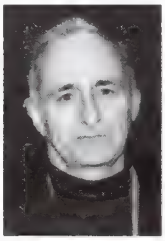
Kenna Frey is summer student pastor at First Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Helen Kruger was ordained at Osler (Sask.) Church for chaplaincy ministry April 2.

John Miller was installed as pastor at First Church, San Francisco, June 4.

Robert Milne will resign as pastor of Eden Church, Schwenksville, Pa., in August.

George Prichard will resign as pastor at Lower Skippack Church, Skippack, Pa., and has also resigned as president of Eastern District Conference. He will be chaplain at Sunnyside Village, Sarasota, Fla.



R. Ramseyer

Ervey Unruh is interim pastor at Calvary Church, Liberal, Kan.

Sieg Wall will begin late summer as pastor at Jubilee Church, Winnipeg.

Donita Wiebe-Neufeld was commissioned April 2 as youth minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta.

WORKERS

Carl Good has resigned as executive director for Mennonite Health Services as of July 1. **Larry Nikkel** will serve as interim executive director.

Alice Ruth and **Robert Ramseyer**, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., returned to Elkhart in mid-May after completing their assignments with COM in Japan. They will itinerate for COM prior to retirement. The Ramseyers first went to Japan in 1954 as evangelists and church planters. Most recently they served with a congregation in Hiroshima. From 1972-78 and 1982-87 Robert was the director of the Mission Training Center at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart.

Harvey E. Sawatzky has been named principal of Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man.

A. Ramseyer

Sawatzky

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **Central States education and program coordinator** (North Newton, Kan.). Qualifications: Christian faith commitment, church membership, commitment to nonviolent peacemaking, a college degree. Applicants must have strong relational, administrative and organizational skills and be able to develop and implement new regional service programs and coordinate personnel recruitment/alumni efforts. MCC work experience preferred. This salaried position requires some travel.

Interested people contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, (717) 859-1151.** Applications due **July 10.**

Zoar Mennonite Church, Langham, Sask., invites applications for a **half-time youth pastor**. This position, with an initial term of two years, becomes available Aug. 1. Applicants should be mature, responsible, evidencing a strong Anabaptist Christian faith, and have a keen interest in youth ministry.

Please send resume, including references, to **Douglas Epp, Box 305, Langham, SK S0K 2L0; fax (306) 283-4725**.

Goshen College foreign language department announces a full-time, potentially continuing position beginning August 1995. The teaching load includes **German** language (elementary, intermediate and advanced levels), German literature and culture. The load will also include one or two courses in another language or other subject fields. The candidate should have an advanced degree (Ph.D. preferred) in German language with study and experience in German language areas. Prior teaching experience at the college level is expected. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.** Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled.

MCC Saskatchewan invites applications for the position of **executive director**. This position is responsible to the board of directors for carrying out the policies of MCCS and for its day-to-day operation. Leadership responsibilities include organizational vision and planning, personnel recruitment and development, resource development/constituency communication, liaison with other MCC groups.

Starting date negotiable, but preferably no later than Jan. 1, 1996. Application deadline: **Aug. 31**.

Please send letters of application, including a resume, salary expectations and the names of three references directly to **Peter H. Peters, MCCS Personnel Committee, Box 354, White City, SK S0G 5B0; (306) 781-2231**.

Freeman Academy has the following positions open for the 1995-96 school year:

- **9 to 12 English**, full-time position, w/wo computer/accounting, w/ declam, yearbook, w/wo boys or girls basketball, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.
- **9 to 12 science**, full-time position, w/wo computers/accounting, w/wo boys or girls basketball, w/wo athletic director, w/wo Bible. Position open until filled.

Send resume, credentials, transcripts to **Larry Horner, Freeman Academy, Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029; (605) 925-4237**.

PASTORLESS IN CINCINNATI

Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship seeks a full-time pastor for 70+ member urban congregation. Candidates must have preaching, teaching, nurturing and administrative skills. CMF is a 20-year-old congregation made up primarily of professionals actively involved in the church.

Send resume to **Linda Headings, 652 Springs Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45255; (513) 753-5867.**

Goshen College seeks a **technical director and house manager** for the Umble Center (Theater). Responsibilities include supervision of lighting, audio, set, make-up and costumes for events in the Umble Center; also lighting work for two other facilities on campus. Candidates should have a B.A. with strong background in theater and interests in working in an academic setting (including assisting with courses), in supervising student crews and in managing a state-of-the art facility.

Screening of applications began June 1 and the position remains open until filled. Responsibilities begin Aug. 1. This annual contract is at an entry-level administrative rank.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Calgary Mennonite Centre for Newcomers invites applications for the position of **executive director**. Duties include program development, public relations and fund raising. Experience in administration and financial management essential. May be a VS or salaried position—to begin immediately.

Please send application or request information **by June 30** to **CMCN Personnel Committee, c/o Mennonite Central Committee Alberta, 76 Skyline Cresc. NE, Calgary, AB T2K 5X7; fax (403) 275-3711**.

Goshen College seeks faculty for a **one-year position in English**. Responsibilities include teaching general and specialized courses in American literature, literary criticism and general education literature and composition. Doctorate preferred; master's degree required. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Screening of applications began June 1 and will continue until the position is filled.

Send curriculum vitae and three references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Goshen College English department announces a full-time, one-year position for the 1995-96 academic year. Responsibilities include teaching general education writing courses, such as Writing about America and expository writing. Other assignments may include ESL composition, creative writing or English-teacher education. The candidate should have an advanced degree (Ph.D. preferred) in composition and rhetoric or literature. Prior teaching experience at the college level is expected. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.** Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled.

Position available: **director of development** for **Maple Lawn Homes**, Eureka, Ill., retirement and nursing home.

Send letters of inquiry to **Robert O. Bertsche, 700 N. Main St., Eureka, IL 61530.**

Goshen College invites applications for the position of **director of student financial aid**, beginning Jan. 1, 1996. Reporting to the director of enrollment, the student financial aid director is a vital member of the enrollment management team. The director is responsible for managing all components of the student financial aid function and providing leadership for a professional and support staff of three people. Qualifications include a conviction for Mennonite higher education, success in leading and motivating others, related administrative skills and experience, and the ability to understand and use computer systems. Consideration will be given for previous student financial aid experience. Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send resume and three references to **Rich Gerig, Director of Enrollment, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7501; fax (219) 535-7660.** Deadline is **July 28**, or until position is filled.

Goshen College chemistry and foods and nutrition department announces a full-time, one-year position in **foods and nutrition** for the 1995-96 academic year. The successful candidate should have a master's degree in nutrition and be a registered dietitian. The assignment will include teaching a full range of specialized nutrition courses (food science, advanced nutrition, meal management, food service systems, nutrition in disease), serving as the adviser to graduates seeking internships, and teaching general courses in health and nutrition. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.** Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled.

Reviews

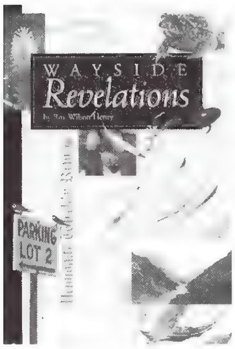
BOOKS

IT'S A WONDERFUL WORLD

Wayside Revelations *by Roy Wilson Henry (Wordsworth, 1994, 141 pages)*

Reviewed by Tim Lehman, Minneapolis

When I think of Roy Henry, I think of a lifetime commitment to the natural world of creation. Anyone who has for years delighted in his "Wayside Revelations" column in the *Mennonite Weekly Review* will agree. This book, *Wayside Revelations*, collects for us a treasure of plain and simple experiences which for years have helped many to feel more grounded in the beauty of our world.



I say plain and simple because that is how this book strikes me. There is no sense of the extraordinary here. There is no impossible summit to climb so that nature can be fully appreciated. Henry only shows us what he sees in everyday life, and that is the real treasure about this book. Anyone can enter Henry's world because it is their world, too. God's creation comes in small, manageable packages like a mourning dove or the sweet ice drippings of a winter-pruned box elder tree. It is Henry's gift to share, this helping us see the miracles of life in our own backyards.

Henry is also a preacher without the sermon. Every "revelation" is a meditation marked at its beginning by a Scripture text. Henry does not preach the sermon because he knows that task is not his. Henry understands that God's messages, held within the environments of God's creatures, preach themselves if only we will look and listen. Henry helps us know that there is a voice of God in the white-footed deer mouse and the colony of cattails.

This is one book you will not want to read from cover to cover, for that would not do it justice. This book you will want to keep on your nightstand or kitchen table. Keep it close and read a revelation daily. Savor each meditation and let it guide you for that day into a closer walk with God in God's world. This book is timeless in the same way that our human relation to nature is timeless. Let this book help you daily find yourself surrounded by God's treasures. It may change your life.

Editor's note: *Roy Wilson Henry died May 24. See his obituary on page 20.*

IS YOUR JOB A MISSION?

Being God's Partner: How to Find the Hidden Link Between Spirituality and Your Work *by Jeffrey K. Salkin (Jewish Lights Publishing, 1994, 181 pages)*

Reviewed by Wally Kroeker, Winnipeg

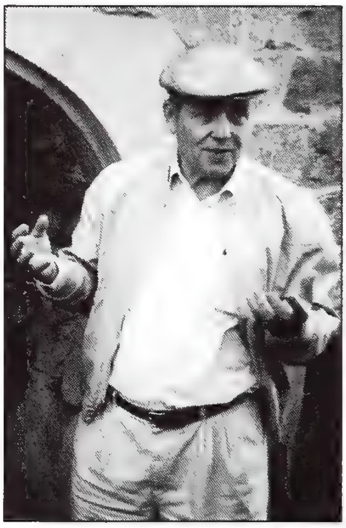
How many of us go to our daily jobs thinking we're on a mission for God? What would happen if we began to "smuggle religion" into the workplace? Jeffrey Salkin wants to help us see our work through the eyes of faith. A rabbi, he writes first to Jews, but Christians are welcome at the table.

Salkin sets out to articulate a Jewish theology of the workplace and to help us think about "how God can enter what many dismiss as the most mundane aspect of our lives—our work." He points out that the Old Testament was far from unconcerned about the realm of work. It had plenty to say about how people should conduct their economic affairs. Its prophets preached in the marketplace, not from a pulpit.

The spiritual mission of a faithful Jew, says Salkin, is to imitate God in all parts of life. (This sounds suspiciously like a call to holistic discipleship.) "As audacious as it must sound, you can imitate God in your work," he says. Using the garment trade as an illustration, he notes that clothing Adam and Eve was one of God's first acts of love for the new couple. "Thus, every act of making, providing and selling clothing is an imitation of God."

By extension, a person in business has a far larger task than trying to rack up profits. The real purpose is to help sustain the world that God created. "To work in the world can be our way of stating that we have a hand in the orderly maintenance of the cosmos," he says.

Salkin's vision goes beyond merely upholding the status quo, however. It includes helping fix and improve what has gone awry. "Tampering with the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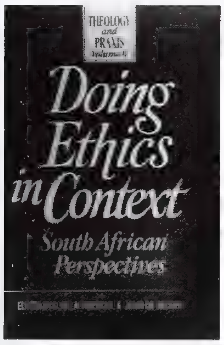
world to make it better is holy work," he says.

A "theological first cousin" to imitating God (for both Jews and Christians) is to be God's partner, Salkin goes on. We are to function as God's junior partners, "picking up where God left off." Doing so will infuse the meaningless blur of ordinary work with vigor and purpose.

A WORLD HORIZON OF FAITH

Doing Theology in Context, *John de Gruchy and C. Villa-Vicencio, editors (Orbis, 1994, 236 pages) and* **Doing Ethics in Context**, *C. Villa-Vicencio and John de Gruchy, editors (Orbis, 1994, 221 pages)*

Reviewed by Jonathan P. Larson, Atlanta



Somewhere in a Las Vegas casino there hangs a sign that reads, "You must be present to win." It is in the spirit of that sign that these companion volumes are published. They are written as introductory texts for theological students in South Africa, but with an eye toward the larger readership of clergy and active lay people. That Orbis Books has made these books available more widely suggests that the issues peculiar to "being present" in South Africa are germane to us as well.

The editors, no strangers to Mennonite communities, were vigorous participants in the campaign to end apartheid. Villa-Vicencio and de Gruchy have assembled samples from a broad spectrum of South African theological perspectives (though evangelicals are largely absent). Common hues do appear, though: Liberation theologies have left a deep imprint on nearly all contributors to these volumes.

While the quality of the contributions is excellent though not uniformly so (sections dealing with black and African theologies offer some of the strongest and weakest chapters), major essays on Christology, redemption and Christian community are masterfully presented and exhibit both competence, passion and "presence." Anabaptists will find special stimulation in chapters on nonviolence, land, character and community, and creation. Perhaps the most glaring omission is that the movement of African Independent/Indigenous Churches, site of an energetic new expression of African faith, is almost totally ignored, probably because it practices a variety of "oral" (not "literate") theology.

These volumes will prove a rich and provocative resource to Christians who want to be "present" on a world horizon of faith.

MINISTERIAL HOW-TO'S

A Funeral Manual *(200 pages),* **A Hospital Visitation Manual** *(190 pages) and* **A Marriage Manual** *(169 pages), all by Perry H. Biddle Jr. (Eerdmans, 1994)*

Reviewed by Marv Friesen, Carman, Man.

This collection of manuals is an updated edition of original work by Biddle, a Presbyterian minister, written from a "pastor's perspective" for pastors.

Each manual is constructed in a systematic, easy-to-follow format that begins with general comments on each topic, followed by step-by-step directions. Both the marriage manual and the funeral manual include model services from a variety of denominational traditions.

The marriage manual begins with a helpful discussion concerning present-day relationship concerns, such as common-law living and divorce. It goes on to guide the pastor through important aspects of both pre- and post-marriage counseling. There is an excellent guide to planning the ceremony with emphasis on a God-centered service.

The funeral manual offers detailed guidance for the Christian funeral service. It also provides a systematic framework for developing a church funeral policy statement, which could include addressing details such as relating to funeral directors, the opening and closing of the casket and honoraria for clergy. Fully half the book consists of funeral liturgies from a variety of denominational traditions—a wealth of resources in and of themselves.

The hospital visitation manual is helpful, offering a detailed description of the patient's perspective. One of the most helpful resources is the section describing pastoral care for types of patients, including the AIDS patient and associates, the burn patient, the cancer patient, the emotionally ill patient, children, the intensive care patient, the unconscious patient, the substance abuse patient, ministry to the dying and others. Each of these particular situations and corresponding needs is described from both a medical and emotional/spiritual perspective. This manual concludes with a number of practical resources: a service of anointing, the Lord's Supper and a selection of prayers, poems and hymns.

All three manuals provide a detailed listing of supplementary resources throughout, along with annotated bibliographies. This set is ideal for those newer to ministry because of its numerous practical helps not normally addressed in academic settings. It will also be welcomed by experienced pastors because of its vast array of resources.

Resources

- **Generation Why youth curriculum sample kits are available**. To order contact Faith & Life Press, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, 1-800-743-2484; e-mail: newtonflp@aol.com or from Faith & Life Press Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781.
- **Johann Cornies** by David H. Epp (CMBC Publications, 1995, $10 Cdn.) is the English translation of Epp's biography of Cornies, a man Epp termed "a capitalist with a socialist's conscience." Contact CMBC Publications, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4; (204) 888-6781.
- **No Longer Alone** by John Toews with Eleanor Loewen (Herald Press, 1995, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.) is a resource for those learning to walk with mentally ill people.

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Editorial

Live it and tell it

In order to tell the good news we need to experience the good news. You can sit down with someone and explain God's plan of salvation, quote the Bible or whatever, but you'll be heard better if you talk about the difference Jesus Christ has made in your life.

When Jesus healed a demoniac (Mark 5:1-20), the man wanted to stay with him, but Jesus said, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you" (verse 19).

Jesus' casting out a demon called "Legion" (verse 9), a military title, carries political implications, and his sending 2,000 swine into the sea carries economic ones. But Jesus also gets personal. He refuses the man's request to leave his homeland and be with Jesus. This man had become an outcast, living among the tombs (verse 3). But now he was changed, and when he returned to the village where he grew up, his change would be evident. People would ask questions. His task was to respond, to tell people what the Lord had done for him.

That is our task as well. Trouble is, our being changed may not be as evident as it was for the demoniac. Few of us have such a dramatic conversion story to tell. Nevertheless, if we have met Jesus and come to know God's love, we have something to tell. This does not mean that we have no problems. It means we have a relationship with the Lord of the Universe and the Wounded Healer, with the one who rules over all and the one who shows compassion to the least of us.

As Lutheran author Richard Jensen said at the recent Council on Church and Media conference, "Stories are the best way to get into people's heads." And stories, he added, have power in themselves and are a stimulus to people's participation. Evangelism, in one sense, is telling our own story as well as the biblical story. And the goal is that people will want to participate in that larger story of God's salvation of the world.

Another problem we may have with following the lead of the demoniac is leaving our comfortable surroundings. We all tend to become settled with certain friends and groups. Mennonites especially show a tendency to stay among themselves and not stray far from their ethnic niche.

If we are to tell the good news, we must not only experience good news but tell it to others. We have to be around others who need to hear good news. And if we are going to tell it to people who are not like us, not a part of our ethnic group, then we will have to learn something about who they are, how they live, how they communicate.

Risky: Being with others, getting to know them and letting them get to know us, feels risky. We have to be secure in who we are and what we believe, be willing to admit we fail at times and don't have all the answers. Yet we know that God has touched us, and we're willing to talk about it.

We don't need to be eloquent speakers. We may simply invite a colleague or next-door neighbor to our house for a meal or to our church for Sunday worship. G. Edwin Bontrager (pages 6-7) and Roy Walls (page 8) offer ideas for bringing people to church and making them feel welcome there.

Our concern for our neighbor or colleague or friend must be genuine. If we only look at others as potential converts and not as people to learn to know, our falseness will likely destroy the relationship.

Early in my Christian life, I went door to door and tried to get people saved. But I wasn't treating them as people, and my main motivation for talking to them was guilt, not love. Later, in college, I learned about friendship evangelism, making friends with people and not giving them the hard sell. This felt more genuine and turned out to be more effective.

A person who has experienced good news will stand out in our day. We are surrounded by despair and pessimism. One of our goals as Christians is to show that Jesus Christ has changed our lives and given us hope. Not a false, everything-is-wonderful jocularity but a realistic hope. Then we must tell that good news, explain how we've been changed, in language our neighbors will understand.

Perhaps we'd rather get in the boat with Jesus, but he calls us to go back to the people who live around us and tell them what the Lord has done for us. *Gordon Houser*

Recyclable

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Become a people against racism / p. 11

Sewing love around the world / p. 12

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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- A long life of energy and service (see page 3)
- The future belongs to the old (see page 5)
- Our graying faith (see page 8)

The graying faithful

Prologue

One of the church's greatest untapped resources may be its older members. In this issue we look through different lenses at our "graying faithful."

Sanna Walters (page 3) introduces us to a remarkable woman known affectionately as Mrs. O.

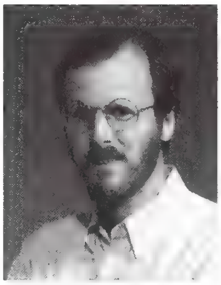
Win Arn and Charles Arn (page 5) offer ways for congregations to become more senior-sensitive. Churches too often ignore the needs of senior adults and take them for granted. We have to be intentional in involving each age group in our congregations.

Since all of us are aging we will want to reflect with Audrey A. Hanlon (page 8) about God's love for us in each stage of life we experience.

Kathleen R. Ruckman's tender story about her mother-in-law (page 9) looks at the mysterious ways humanity may experience God's presence.

In our Speaking Out column (page 11), Cathleen Hockman challenges us to look at how our institutions may be promoting racism.

Emily Will profiles Elizabeth Weaver (page 12), another example of a tireless, faithful servant in God's kingdom.



As of the date of this issue, Wichita '95 is only two weeks away. Let us all be in prayer for this event, that it may serve to build up the church. *gh*

Next issue: Lessons from Hiroshima

Cover: Photo by Jean-Claude Lejeune

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite **(ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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Octogenarian Mrs. Oglesby serves the homeless with the energy and compassion of her 48 years of teaching.

A long life of *energy* and *service*

Sanna Walters

You're never more than six acquaintances away from knowing any one person in the world, someone has said. That means that a taxi driver on a Paris street knows someone who knows someone who knows someone who knows someone who knows you. I don't know if that's true, but I'd be willing to bet it's close.

The world got smaller for me one summery night in June. I was touring a friend's garden, which is actually more like a small farm. My friend, Ross Faris, has a lot of acreage, not to mention piles of vegetables and a big heart. Earlier that evening we had enjoyed a meal featuring the latest ripened cabbage, peppers, red potatoes and dill.

Ross has so much produce from several huge gardens in and around Indianapolis that he couldn't possibly sell all his produce at the infamous table at the end of his driveway, much less eat it all himself. So he gives much of his harvest away to people who need it. Which is where my story returns to Paris taxi drivers and the six people in the world we all know.

As we stood in the garden, Ross described how delighted he was with the 80-year-old retired gym teacher who comes around every week, sometimes more than once, and loads her huge pickup with fresh produce for a downtown soup kitchen.

What a small, good world. He was talking about Mrs. Oglesby, my high school gym teacher at Crispus Attucks High School, 1975. Mrs. Oglesby was one of the few good things about those turbulent two years as a teenager in the middle of a new program called "desegregation." Some 18 years later, in a garden along the White River, we were connected by a mutual friend and soon to meet again.

Some time later Mrs. Oglesby and I reconnected at the Indianapolis Public Library. She was kind enough to tell me I hadn't changed a bit and gracious enough to admit that it had "snowed a lot" on her salt-and-pepper head.

It became clear that helping the homeless is more than a hobby for "Mrs. O," as so many of her students throughout her 48 years of teaching at Attucks called her. Though retired since 1986, she tours Indianapolis six days a week in her 17-year-old pickup, "Big Red," gathering surplus food for the homeless. She stops at restaurants. She visits grocery stores. She picks up part of the harvest at Ross's house.

Then she delivers the food where it's needed—to homeless shelters

Helping the homeless is more than a hobby for "Mrs. O," as so many of her students throughout her 48 years of teaching at Attucks called her.

Gym teacher, pilot, servant: *Mrs. O (right) at a soup kitchen with the author (left)*

and to her pet project, the Cathedral Kitchen at 14th and Delaware. There she spends each Sunday helping set out a healthy noon meal for street dwellers. More than a few of the men she feeds were once her students at Attucks.

Mrs. Oglesby is confident she was born in 1913, even though her records show her birth date as 1915. "My sister was there, and she declares it was 1913," she says.

Her father was 76 when she was born and lived to see her graduate from high school. A Cherokee Indian who fought in the Civil War, he handed the flag to President Lincoln at the Appomattox Courthouse after General Lee surrendered. Her mother, an African-American, died two months after Mrs. O was born.

Mrs. O has always worked hard to make people's lives better. In the 1960s and 1970s, she spent many spare hours organizing an annual Caribbean cruise for students who had hardly been out of Indianapolis. The first year she barely filled a bus. By the time the annual trips ended in the late '70s, parents and students from throughout the Indianapolis public school system filled 200 buses for the trip to Miami and the boarding of the boat.

"It was a lot of hard work but it was fun," she says. "The students enjoyed it so much that even now when I run into them they say, 'Hey, Mrs. O, when are we going again?'"

Today Mrs. O takes frequent breaks from her "mission" work. As a retired general in the Air Force auxiliary, she can fly standby for free. A licensed pilot, she's even been known to fly herself, though not lately. Recent trips include Hawaii, Greece, continental Europe and Washington, to see her daughter.

As we close our conversation and push in our chairs to go, it's hard to believe Mrs. O is an octogenarian. It's those years as a competitive athlete and physical education teacher. The only thing that gives her away is the slight limp.

"My doctor says I have the knees of an old football player," she says. "I go a little slower, but I don't want surgery."

She gives me a lift in Big Red to my car and hands me a bag full of fresh Roma tomatoes and sweet green peppers.

"I'll see you again," she says.

"Yes," I respond. "I'll see you again." And as Big Red lumbers north on Meridian Street, I wonder how many people in this world are better off because they've connected with Mary Oglesby. A scared freshman. An urban farmer. A homeless person. A busload of teenagers. Perhaps a Paris taxi driver?

Sanna Walters lives in Indianapolis. This article is reprinted with permission from MennoExpressions, *a publication of First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis.*

The *future* belongs to the *old*

Ways to make your church senior-sensitive

Win Arn and Charles Arn

Like beach residents who are unaware of an approaching tsunami, most congregations still seem to assume that "the future of the church is its youth." Today, tomorrow, and well into the 21st century the more accurate description is, "The future belongs to the old."

Many churches have a token senior adult class, perhaps a monthly potluck or field trip for their older adults. But such approaches are inadequate, if not irrelevant, to the task of reaching and ministering to the rapidly growing community of people over 50.

Why are most churches so "senior insensitive"?

Ageism: This disease discriminates against, diminishes and demeans age.

Ignorance: A miniscule number of today's church leaders have been trained in the unique needs, opportunities and outreach strategies required for people over age 50.

Irrelevance: Most "senior adult" church groups are operating on assumptions about senior adults that grew out of a different time and place. Today's senior adults are different from their parents or grandparents.

In the midst of decreasing resources, most churches don't realize the "hidden treasure" inherent in the senior adults of the church.

There indeed are effective ways for churches to respond to the challenge of an aging population. The graying of North America provides an enormous opportunity for the church, perhaps unique in this century. But without a major retooling of strategy and tactics, the church will be left behind.

What can be done?

Realize that all seniors aren't seniors. A new generational grouping has emerged in our society during the past generation. Its members are called "middle adults" and include those people between 50 and 70 years of age. They are, as *U.S. News & World Report* says, "a new generation, different not only in size but in vitality and outlook." Older adults are living healthier, more active, productive, longer lives. A person of 50 or 60 can expect to live 15, 20, 30 more years. They are not, certainly in their own minds, "senior adults."

Realize that age does make a difference. People 30 years old are different from people 60 years old; not only in the hair on their head but the mind inside. Older adults think differently from younger adults. David Wolfe ("Targeting the Mature Mind," *American Demographics*, March 1994), a knowledgeable researcher and marketer, draws some contrasts (see chart below):

Older adults	*Young adults*
• Declining influence by peers	• Heavily influenced by peers
• Declining materialistic values	• Highly materialistic values
• More subjective	• More objective
• More introspective	• More extrospective
• High sensitivity to context	• Low sensitivity to context
• Perceptions in shades of gray	• Perceptions in black and white
• More flexible	• More rigid
• More individualistic	• More subordinated to others
• More discretionary behavior	• More predictable behavior
• Less price sensitive	• More price sensitive
• Complex ways of determining values	• Simple ways of determining values
• Whole-picture oriented	• Detail oriented

The success of your adult ministry will be directly related to the quality of your leaders.

What does this changing demographic landscape mean for the church? Most importantly it means that the old ways of doing senior adults ministry must be re-evaluated. Even the term "senior adult" will become politically incorrect. As more and more Baby Boomers inch toward that age category (the first Boomers will turn 50 next year), the stigma attached to the word "senior" will make it a liability to effective ministry.

Even now, when churches offer a senior adult program, at most only 15 percent of the church members who qualify to be there actually are. We have found that most do not want to be lumped into the category of senior citizen, either in the minds of others or their own.

The new and emerging strategies for effective ministry to "middle adults" have many implications for programming, evangelism and scheduling of church activities. The church that is "age sensitive" will provide a variety of groups to appeal to the diversity of interests, needs and activities for each age group.

Here are five components of an age-sensitive adult ministry:

1. Find, select, train leaders. The success of your adult ministry will be directly related to the quality of your leaders. Someone needs to own the goal of ministry/outreach to young, middle and senior adults. The leaders who will be most successful in each group have a genuine love for people in that group. It's not a job but a ministry.

In research we conducted with 500 churches that had a full- or part-time senior adult ministries staff member, we found that the leaders who had received specific training in this area were far more effective—and their adult ministries were more likely to be growing—than were leaders who had received no training. (Eighty percent of all older adult ministries staff members had received no training whatsoever in their field.) We also found that retired pastors are generally ineffective as middle and senior adult leaders unless they have been retrained in the unique issues and challenges of senior adult ministry in the 1990s.

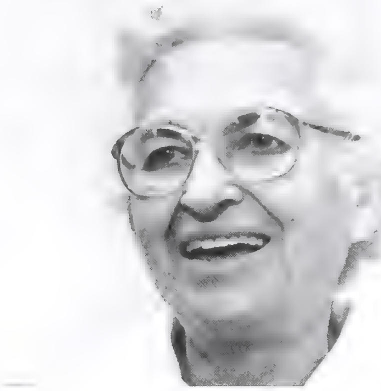
2. Get the facts. Here is a proven principle: "Abundant, accurate information, properly interpreted and applied, enables churches to be good stewards of the grace of God and effective communicators of the gospel of Christ."

What are the actual statistics in your church? How many members are over age 50? 55? 60? 65? What are the age groupings in your community? How many are homebound? What percentage are males, females? What are the various needs and interests represented in your prospective constituency? Effective programs and activities will be based on the findings of your research.

3. Begin with an adult ministry, not a senior adult group. This distinction is important. If you have a "senior adult group," you limit the potential involvement to those individuals who see themselves as "senior adults." Many other senior adults in your congregation and in your community will not identify with "those old people." But if your paradigm is an adult "ministry," all kinds of groups can develop, many that would not be identified as senior adult. A church of 300 members could have 10 to 15 adult groups responding to a variety of needs and touching the lives of many more people.

Trinity Photos: R. Meier

The 60-plus-year-old age group is growing three times faster than the population at large.



RNS

Older adults are living healthier, more active, productive, longer lives.

4. Develop a purpose statement. A clearly written purpose statement will be the guiding light for a successful older adult ministry. The statement should be "owned" by the members and be a yardstick to measure progress regularly. If a clear purpose statement is not established and used early in the ministry, the activities will become increasingly self-serving and self-centered.

Below is one purpose statement developed by an age-sensitive adult ministry. Use or adapt it if it describes the purpose you desire for your adult ministry. If not, create your own.

"To communicate and share God's love to those in the church family and those outside the church. The assumption behind the adult ministry, groups and activities sponsored by this ministry is that they exist for the purpose of serving, not being served; of giving, not receiving."

5. Build your adult ministry on adult motivators. Marketing researchers have spent considerable time and money identifying reasons today's older adults buy or don't buy certain products. Their discoveries are of value to church leaders seeking to reach this same generation and encourage them to "buy" a new lifestyle in the Christian faith and community. According to these studies older adults are motivated by one of five values that form the foundation of most of their meaningful activity:

- **Autonomy:** They desire to be or remain self-sufficient.
- **Social and spiritual connectedness:** They respond to people more than programs.
- **Altruism:** They desire to give something back to the world.
- **Personal growth:** They desire to continue developing as human beings.
- **Revitalization:** They respond to activities that bring fresh and new experiences.

Effective older adult ministries of the 1990s and 21st century will integrate these values and motivators into a creative variety of activities and experiences.

The 60-plus-year-old age group is growing three times faster than the population at large; and for the first time in U.S. history there are more citizens over age 65 than under age 18.

Churches not prepared will be swamped by the sheer numbers, diversity and impact of these older adults.

Win Arn is founder and president of LIFE International. Charles Arn is editor of Lifeline, *a newsletter for leaders of older adult ministries.*

Common church problems

1. A survey recently conducted among pastors indicated that their most common frustration is a lack of dedicated laypeople to do the work of the church.

2. Financial shortfalls are the most common reason for not adding buildings, programs and/or staff.

3. Members transferring jobs and/or moving to another community account for 3 to 5 percent membership loss in a congregation each year.

4. Low institutional loyalty is a common characteristic of Baby Boomers. Most churches find it difficult to solicit membership or even long-term commitment from this age group.

5. Biblical illiteracy is common among laity in many churches. As a result pastoral teaching often remains at the elementary level.

Source: Win Arn and Charles Arn

The 'hidden treasure'

1. A separate study found that senior adults average two to three times as many available hours for church-related activities as any other age group.

2. In a given year, one senior adult church member will give seven times the amount of money that a Baby Boomer member will give in the same church.

3. Senior adults change address an average of once every 12 years, compared with the national average of once every seven years.

4. High institutional loyalty is a common characteristic of senior adults. When they join, they stay and are committed.

5. Most senior adult members have been Christians for years. Having experienced life's mountains as well as its valleys, they have a wealth of maturity and wisdom to share with others.

Our graying faith

Watching the play Driving Miss Daisy _inspires thoughts of God's care for us as we age._

Audrey A. Hanlon

Paint it gray. The Baby Boomers. Maturity clubs. Sometimes our faith. Then there is Miss Daisy—very gray—becoming the white-haired Atlanta matriarch, and Hoke, her dignified, graying, African-American chauffeur, who lives life with love in his heart as well as his head.

On a sunny day in January there were still enough emerald green grass and blooming pansies in Victoria, B.C., to please the eye when my husband and I took a ferry from Seattle to Victoria. At McPherson Theater in Victoria (where gray is spelled "grey," as the British do), we watched Canadian actress Rita Howell portray the stiff-necked but universal Miss Daisy in Alfred Uhry's play *Driving Miss Daisy*.

Graying destination: We watched her believably age from 73 to 97 as the relationship between her and Hoke, played by Errol Slue, grew from one of imposition to tolerance to mutual dependence. When we visited Miss Daisy in a nursing home, she shuffled, bent over a walker, to her chair; we saw life portrayed near its final, graying destination.

The dictionary defines gray as "dull, dreary and dismal," while the Scriptures resonate from the pages of Proverbs: "The glory of young men is their strength, gray hair the splendor of the old" (Proverbs 20:29 NIV). God seems to delight in using his "crowns of splendor." Moses, Abraham, Sarah, Enoch, Simeon and Anna are only a few Bible characters who dedicated their lives to God's service in old age.

At the end of the 90-minute play we sat in the dark-gray light of the theater in what seemed like a long pause before the lights were turned up. The banter I heard before the play was now a solemn stillness. The trenchant impact of Miss Daisy's fast-forwarded aging and life's cruel cutting-away of dignity enveloped us, forcing us into her sad atmosphere.

For a fleeting moment I had the vision of a lost people. Considering the tragedy of lostness, as well as the triumphs of life, I knew again why the word "theater" comes from the Greek word for "pain."

Bittersweet years: I sensed the Holy Spirit's tender love for those of us experiencing the bittersweet years of aging: "Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you" (Isaiah 46:4, NIV).

It is God's wisdom to strengthen my character into Christlikeness for today and the hereafter.

Jeremiah tells us that God knows the thoughts he has toward us, "thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jeremiah 29:11, KJV). If my "expected end" should turn out humble and insignificant, God understands and cares. I can be cheerful because it is all part of his wisdom to strengthen my character into Christlikeness for today and the hereafter.

If my body wears out first, I know it will be cradled in God's love; for I have found meaning, not in what I produce but in what I am—a child of God, loved immensely by him. If my mind, like Miss Daisy's, experiences "gray-out" (a temporary loss or blurring of vision caused by oxygen deficiency), I will do what pilots do when experiencing gray-out. I will tighten my muscles and strengthen my mind as much as possible and line up my spiritual-control yoke with God's upward direction.

As for today, to keep Webster's lackluster gray wolf from the door I will remember the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Man's mind stretched to a new idea never goes back to its original dimensions." I will meditate on the Scriptures, for meditation causes me to think, to stretch my brain and spirit and to pray with my whole self.

Attainment of character: "The final stage in the life of faith is attainment of character," writes Oswald Chambers in *My Utmost for His Highest*, "... faith that has been tried and proven and stood the test." When the graying years end and the test is over, I will step into eternity to receive full use of my mind and spirit, knowing that one day even my body will be resurrected from its sleep of death to newness of life in the Lord.

Until then, I can learn to be like Hoke, who because of his servant-heart had enough respect, friendship and self-esteem to give an abundance away to others. He was kind and forgiving toward Miss Daisy, despite her crankiness. He did not seek his own honor, or even his own rights, over hers.

Just like Jesus, "the servant of all" (Mark 9:35, NIV), who is ageless.

Audrey A. Hanlon lives in Birdsboro, Pa. Reprinted with permission from Gospel Herald.

In spite of suffering from Alzheimer's disease, Elnora could still pray.

The amazing spirit

RNS

Kathleen R. Ruckman

I blew up balloons, hung crepe-paper streamers across our kitchen doorway and wondered, Is this worth all the effort? She won't remember anyway. I recalled the words of Elnora, my husband's mother: "No one has ever given me a birthday party."

Actually, we had given Elnora a party every year. But Alzheimer's disease had crept in and robbed her not only of the ability to remember her own birthdays, but also of the certainty that we loved her and gave parties for her.

Feeling drained from months of giving to Elnora, I struggled to accept her and her forgetfulness. I asked God to give me more patience and understanding. God answered my prayer by bringing inspiration from a most unexpected source—Elnora herself.

In earlier days Elnora and I had exchanged prayer requests. However, when the Alzheimer's disease drastically worsened, I quit asking her to pray—until my mother was diagnosed with cancer. I will never forget the day that I asked Elnora to pray over the phone with me for my mother.

Among our many telephone prayers I particularly remember that one. Though she had difficulty communicating with people, Elnora was able to communicate with God. Her prayer made sense, and it was a beautiful prayer.

My mother lived to have two more summer visits with us in Oregon. She died in the spring of 1992. Though Elnora was declining because of the disease, I once again asked her to pray after I had returned from my mother's funeral in Pennsylvania. As we sat at my kitchen table, Elnora took my hands in hers and prayed that God would be with me and with the rest of my family.

Again, Elnora's prayer made sense. I concluded that the spirit and the mind must be separate. That insight renewed me in such a way that I no longer felt the same about Alzheimer's disease or about people who lie in a helpless state in nursing homes or hospitals. If the mind and spirit are indeed separate, then I can trust that my loved ones perceive God and can pray without ceasing, even when they can no longer talk or recognize their families. That thought has helped me look at what is still there. Behind the symptoms that are physical and temporal lies something eternal.

God answered my prayer by bringing inspiration from a most unexpected source—Elnora herself.

A Bible passage I had read many times through the years suddenly ministered to me in a wonderful way: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words" (Romans 8:26 NRSV). As I searched the Scriptures, another passage came alive to me: "The human spirit is the lamp of the Lord, searching every innermost part" (Proverbs 20:27 NRSV). I made a decision then—to watch for the glow of that lamp.

Today Elnora is comfortably settled in her foster home less than two miles from our home. The full-time canopy of love and protection for her there gives peace to our family. We see her often, even though during those visits we still face the challenges of endless repetition, confusion and other symptoms. I still ask her to pray, and she still amazes me. It's as though she enters a new dimension, with increased vocabulary, concentration and sensitivity.

Elnora celebrated her 81st birthday on Jan. 6. Because she is no longer able to go out (her confusion becomes too great), we brought Elnora a yellow rosebud and gift at her foster home. To show our love, we hugged her, and I sang "Happy Birthday" softly at her side. We knew that even if her mind didn't grasp it all, her spirit did.

Kathleen Ruckman lives in Eugene, Ore.

Letters

INTEGRATION CAN WORK

The first year of the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference is now history. We want to share some reflections of our past year. We speak not of myths or assumptions but simply from experience.

Integration can and will work if people's minds have Christ at the center and they are willing to put "their way" aside, working together for the good of the conference.

Integration can and will work if fear of the unknown is replaced by trust in God and trust in each other.

Integration can and will work if there are leaders with a vision for bringing people together, being sensitive to issues and feelings.

The Lord certainly had his hand in the integration process of this conference and its first year of operation. The lines of difference (both accurate and inaccurate) that people have drawn between MCs and GCs are now difficult for us to see. The people of PNMC enthusiastically embrace integration and thank God for how he has led and blessed us beyond expectation. This was evident in our annual sessions just concluded.

Our prayer is that all MCs and GCs will also be able to experience this beautiful work of the Lord. *John Willems, moderator, Cleon Claassen, assistant moderator, Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference*

Ideas your church can try

First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, ran the following in its May 12 newsletter:

"It has been reported that Menno Simons, 16th-century leader in the Dutch Anabaptist movement, is in the Bluffton area. Scholars are busy scouring his writings for any mention of a foretold visitation to these parts—so far to no avail.

Not to miss an opportunity, members of the senior high youth fellowship have formed the Monk Removal Service. Dispatcher for the corporation is well-known local leader Jeff Boehr.

If Menno happens to appear in your garden or on your front porch, here's what to do. First, call the dispatcher (Jeff Boehr) within 24 hours. He will send one or more senior high youth to your home to remove the monk. You will be invited to make a small donation for this removal service, which will also give you the privilege of deciding where Menno turns up next. (All proceeds will go toward the bus trip to Wichita '95.)"

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Saraba, Burkina Faso—During the eight weeks that we have been teaching, this town has experienced two crises. First, there was a bad hunting accident in which a man was shot and rushed to the hospital. He was recovering fine, then took a sudden turn for the worse and died. Our children especially felt for the hunter, who was a special friend to our family.

Ten days later, we celebrated the joyous occasion of a wedding in this village, lasting several days with many guests. But the night before the festivities were over, the bride attacked her new husband with a razor blade. Everyone was in shock. The groom had been taken to the neighboring village for treatment, and the bride was severely beaten. But the ceremonies had to go on, and they did, but such empty ritual. The bride had a lover.

As the dust clears and we see how relationships have been restored, we need to look deeper at what else was happening. After the man in the hunting accident died, his relatives went to inquire about the cause of death. They learned that the injured man had been slow in giving his father the proper funeral sacrifices. So the hunter was merely the instrument used by the ancestor to inflict the fatal punishment. For the marriage case, the lover and the groom belong to the same extended family, and the attack was instigated by the ancestors, who hold to a taboo against two men of the same clan going after the same woman. So the old men of the family have done the proper ancestor sacrifices and peace is restored. It is a strong reminder to us that though our Bible stories are understood, people are hearing these stories through different filters from ours. We need to continue learning.

Pray with us that the Samogho people may come to know the power of the risen Lord and his rule over all lesser powers. *Donna (Kampen) and Loren Entz*

Sichuan, China—One church leader in Anhui recently received 1,000 Bibles in the mail. Every single one of them was illegal, and he had not sent for them. He didn't know where they came from, who sent them or how anyone had learned his address. He had no intention of breaking the law, but suddenly found himself with a rather large pile of contraband that could result in his arrest, not to mention the closing down of his meeting place. Have you ever tried to hide 1,000 Bibles?

Smuggled Bibles are illegal in China. It is possible to legally import study Bibles and other study helps not published in China. (Last month we mailed ourselves 10 study Bibles from Hong Kong. The parcel arrived conveniently preopened, as they sometimes do, but everything was still there.) That smuggled Bibles are illegal may be all that some local leaders know about Christianity. Having smuggled Bibles in a church makes Christians criminals in the eyes of such leaders and, equally damaging, it reinforces the old impression that Christianity is a foreign religion supported by hostile foreign organizations intent on breaking the law, while encouraging Chinese citizens to do the same. *Jeanette and Todd Hanson*

Speaking out

Become a people against racism

Racism is more than personal; our institutions also need to confront it.

Cathleen Hockman

What is racism? Anglos tend mostly to associate racism with personal actions and attitudes, said Joe Barndt at the "Restoring Our Sight" conference in March (see the April 11 issue of *The Mennonite*, page 17).

By contrast, he said, people of color often are more concerned about systemic racism—which gives privilege to white people over other people. And the institution of the Mennonite church is not immune to systemic racism.

The church racist? How so? In a workshop, Barndt, director of Crossroads, an interfaith ministry for racial justice, described the roots of institutional racism this way:

Institutions, he said, were created to benefit a specific population—in the case of the Mennonite church, people of Swiss-German or Russian descent. Thus institutions were intended for people of one race—and were so legally. With the civil rights movement, the laws changed; now institutions were supposed to serve people of all races without discrimination.

But while the laws changed, the structures didn't—not at the core. And so they kept on doing what they were built to do: to serve white people and assimilate everyone else.

It's not necessarily bad that the North American Mennonite church originally was designed to serve Swiss-German ethnic Mennonites, Barndt suggested. But it is wrong if we don't transform it now.

How to make these changes? Barndt outlined five areas in which institutional racism can be addressed: (1) personnel (staffing); (2) institutional policy and practices; (3) community, members or clientele (those the institution serves); (4) structure and delivery system (how decisions are made and who makes them/accountability); and (5) mission and purpose.

Most institutions begin to confront racism with the first two areas: attempt to diversify staff, make sure racist comments are not tolerated. But institutions that start here tend to hit a ceiling; they never reach the other three areas, Barndt said. To truly become antiracist, he emphasized, an institution must start with its mission and purpose, and work up from there. Making the profound change needed requires no less than a new identity.

Barndt's analysis may help us understand racism in the Mennonite church. Take the latest Mennonite Church-General Conference Mennonite Church statement on racism, which was adopted at the Normal '89 assembly.

Institutional racism: The document begins by noting that "we intend to become one church of many peoples." As for church institutions, the statement confesses these "have not always escaped our society's pattern of institutional racism. We are called … to review our practices in employment, promotion, purchasing of materials and inclusion of minorities on boards and committees."

The new Mennonite Confession of Faith, up for delegate approval at Wichita this summer, addresses basic questions of identity. While this document speaks plainly about such things as care for creation, relationships between women and men, oaths and marriage, its references to racism are slight.

In the confession we are called to acknowledge, "True faith means giving first loyalty to God's kingdom, rather than to any … ethnic group that claims our allegiance" (Article 17). And we admit, "Sin is not only an individual matter but involves groups, nations and structures determined by class, race, gender or nationality" (Article 6).

Yet even Article 22 on peace, justice and nonresistance says little about when we ourselves are the unjust ones. "We witness against all forms of violence, including … hostility among races and classes," the article says. But it does not develop how we are working to cleanse ourselves of our own racism.

We can hardly talk about being Mennonite without referring to our witness against war or to stewardship. But we do not yet see anti-racism as an essential part of who we are as a people; our Confession of Faith reflects that. And we are deceived if we believe that racism is no longer an issue, now that we have called two men of African descent, one to head a church agency [Mennonite Board of Missions] and one to serve as moderator-elect [of the Mennonite Church].

The church's mission, according to Article 10, is to proclaim the reign of God in word and deed, to be a city on a hill, a light to the nations. Becoming a people dedicated to dismantling racism could be one of the most concrete ways we might shine that light—which this world so desperately needs.

Cathleen Hockman is assistant editor of Gospel Herald.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite.*

RNS

We do not yet see anti-racism as an essential part of who we are as a people.

Sewing love around the world

Elizabeth Weaver has produced thousands of potholders and balls for workers and children.

Emily Will

It may be called Fairmount Rest Home, but the occupant of Room 234 doesn't like to rest much. She keeps her sewing machine humming several hours a day and her fingers busy with crochet hook and yarn for several additional hours.

Mennonite Central Committee workers carry useful mementos of 93-year-old Elizabeth Weaver's industry and love with them all over the world. In MCC homes from Alberta to Zimbabwe, her colorful round "crazy patch" potholders brighten walls and protect hands from hot pots. And MCC children in dozens of countries roll and throw her crocheted-covered balls, wondering what's jingling inside.

Growing-up years: Since 1986 the chatty, cheerful Elizabeth has produced some 2,500 potholders and hundreds of balls for MCC workers beginning new assignments. With the items, she says, go her daily prayers that God will supply the workers' needs and guide the children in their growing-up years.

Elizabeth's "potholder ministry" began after she sent several dozen of her creations with grandnephews and grandnieces heading out on mission assignments. Small and flat, the hot pads are easy to pack, and Elizabeth's relatives reported they made great gifts.

"People liked them; sometimes they might be the only colorful item in a mud hut," Elizabeth says. "And since my nieces and nephews weren't yet able to speak the language, giving them as gifts was a way of opening up communication with neighbors."

Elizabeth's labor is also a gift to God's earth. "One less item for the landfill," she says with a twinkle in her eye, displaying a pencil holder she fashioned from a used tin can and a crocheted cover. "I always did like to sew and mend and fix up used things to help supply the needs of the world," she says.

Upon receiving a potholder, "Some people say, 'Thank you for the nice piece of art,' but it's just nibbles sewn together," she says with a laugh. The "crazy patch" style allows her to use those "nibbles" without worrying about matching.

Friends, relatives and nurses at the rest home give Weaver fabric and yarn scraps. Snippets too small for a potholder find their way into pillow stuffing. Seven-Up caps—saved from the rest home's mid-morning refreshments—produce the "jingle" in her balls. She also recycles greeting cards by pasting on devotional materials, drawing a pretty border and sending them to a "books abroad" program or a prison ministry.

Support and prayers: A new MCC worker's reaction upon receiving the potholder is usually, "Wow! One for each of us?" says Melody Rupley of MCC's personnel department. "They express awe that one woman creates hundreds of potholders, and they view them as a symbol of church people's support and prayers. Many ask for Elizabeth's address so they can write and thank her."

Elizabeth grew up in the Lancaster County, Pa., town of Union Grove, the daughter of a harness maker who served as pastor of Weaverland Brick Church and also sold books. When older she worked in her father's enterprise, Weaver's Bookstore in Blue Ball, and managed it after her father died in 1944. When the bookstore was sold to become Provident Bookstore, Elizabeth "retired" and volunteered as a mender and then a quilter at the MCC Material Resource Center in Ephrata, Pa.

She's been sewing ever since. "I don't sew so fast now, but I can still guide the machine and see the eye of the needle. My hands are numb and I can't hear so well. I'm like an old car that keeps getting new rattles" she says with a robust laugh.

Elizabeth is graciously learning to live with the increasing limitations of old age. Fortunately, one body part is not wearing out—her heart.

Emily Will works in Akron, Pa., with Mennonite Central Committee Communications.

Emily Will (MCC)

Potholder ministry: *Elizabeth Weaver at her sewing machine. In addition to the hundreds and hundreds of potholders and balls she fashions for Mennonite Central Committee personnel, she also makes balls for children who are patients of her nephew, Dr. Richard Weaver, an Ephrata, Pa., surgeon, and of his son, a dentist.*

News

Bluffton offers its first master's program

Bluffton, Ohio (BC)—Bluffton College is now offering the first courses in its new master of arts in education program.

The degree is the college's first graduate program. It will confer its first graduate degrees in May 1998.

"Our focus is to help teachers become even better at what they are doing," said Diane Neal, assistant professor of education and graduate school admissions and recruitment counselor. "The Bluffton program will concentrate on content and methodology as opposed to offering recertification in other areas. In this area we feel unique."

Teaching peace: "Another unique quality is the emphasis on peace and justice issues as they relate to teaching and learning," said Elizabeth Hostetler, education department chair and director of The Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center. "Teachers seem very interested in such issues because they see the impact of violence and injustice on their students' attitudes about how they deal with difficulties ... and whether or not they feel a sense of hope about their futures.

"Seeing themselves as victims and in turn victimizing is a part of so many of our children's lives today," Hostetler continued. "We want to address these issues in a number of courses including the arts, American studies and curriculum development."

"Teachers at either the elementary or the secondary level can tailor our program to fit their needs," explained Neal. The 30-semester-hour program includes a required core of 24 hours, plus six hours of concentration electives either in the humanities, mathematics and sciences, or the arts.

Courses offered this summer include The World of Art; Curriculum Workshop, focusing on paper making and the creation of art, and Curriculum Integration, which will give direction on incorporating the arts into other content areas.

Classes in the program will be taught by Bluffton professors from various disciplines. One or two graduate classes will be offered each academic year, with a heavier concentration of courses during the summer.

Classes will draw on The Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center, which offers workshops led by well-known people in the arts.

Another plus for this program is Bluffton professor Dick Hansgen's work with Project Discovery, an inquiry-based science program. Neal said, "He's one of a few professors asked to participate in Project Discovery, so he's a valuable resource for us."

The needed push to begin the master's program came from the proposed 1997 Ohio Teacher Education Standards. Beginning in 1997 new teachers will be required to obtain a master's degree or take the equivalent number of course hours within 10 years of receiving their initial teaching certificate.

More than 40 inquiries and approximately 18 applications have been received to date. Applications were evenly split between elementary and secondary educators.

The Ohio Board of Regents will make its on-site visit in August concerning degree approval. Approval was granted in May by the OBR and North Central Association to begin offering classes this summer.

CPT helps rebuild home after Israeli attack

Hebron, West Bank (CPT)—On Friday, June 2, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) destroyed the home of Palestinian Omar Abu Eisha with seven anti-tank missiles, killing Ha'med Najati Ya'mur, who was wanted by the Israeli authorities. The following day, local Palestinians began rebuilding the demolished house.

On the morning of the attack, 1,000 Israeli soldiers surrounded Eisha's neighborhood in Hebron searching for Ya'mur. They had orders to shoot him on sight because of his association with Hamas (Islamic resistance

Inside the news

MCC closes office in Thailand / p. 14

Former German military base hosts Mennonite fellowship / p. 15

New Ukrainian Mennonites seek help / p. 16

Northern District fosters mission churches, processes St. Paul change of status / p. 17

Nongovernmental organization heads reassess role of development / p. 18

Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute's board of directors decided to recommend the establishment of a new institution in the place of SCBI to be run on the current campus. The new institution would have a new program and governing structure that would include incorporation separate from the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta and the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan. "The new plan will take into consideration the realities of the '90s, including educational needs of young people and budget cutbacks by conferences," says an SCBI news release. The recommendation will go to the school's joint delegates conference Sept. 30.

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A conference in Tasmania in May saw the formation of the Anabaptist Network of Australia and New Zealand. The new organization is not a denomination but a network. Attendees of the conference came from various denominations. The network hopes to provide resources to communities, churches, teaching institutions and individuals interested in exploring the relevance of Anabaptism in Australia and New Zealand. A newsletter, resource center and book service are possible projects. The conference formed around the 50th anniversary of the publication of Harold S. Bender's *The Anabaptist Vision.*

In September, Spurgeon's College, a Baptist seminary in London, will launch the first degree program in Anabaptist studies ever offered in the British Isles. Stuart Murray, co-director of the new program, said there is ongoing debate about the historical link between European Mennonites and early English Baptists. He noted a growing interest in the British Isles in Anabaptism.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee Canada Mental Health and Disabilities Program will sponsor a symposium on the church's role in Canadian health-care reform. The symposium, called "Sacred Cows, White Elephants, Dinosaurs and Mutants," will take place Sept. 29 at the Nutana Park Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. For information contact MCC Canada Mental Health and Disabilities Program, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

• • •

Unemployed youth and low-income seniors will benefit from a new Mennonite Central Committee Canada program in Dartmouth, N.S. According to Doug Vicars, who directs MCC Canada's job creation efforts in the Maritimes, the funds will be used to employ 10 young people who will provide services for low-income seniors who want to live in their own homes. The program, which will last six months, will pay participants $155 per week. Youth who complete the program will receive a $500 bonus; those who go on to further studies, get a job or start their own business will receive an additional $1,500. The program is made possible by a grant of $100,000 from the federal government's Youth Service Program, which enables young people to serve their communities and gain marketable skills. When the project ends, Vicars hopes to involve local churches in continuing to provide assistance to seniors.

movement).

Christian Peacemaker Team's (CPT) violence reduction team, on assignment in Hebron to document the violence and harassment from soldiers and settlers against Palestinians, assisted in rebuilding the home and gathered testimony from town elders regarding the events.

WEST BANK
Jerusalem
Hebron
ISRAEL

Israeli authorities gave Eisha five minutes to pack up and evacuate before destroying his home. The blast destroyed most of his belongings, including sheep, gold, clothes and photographs. The explosion also killed Ya'mur, severing his legs, hands and head. Nearby homes were damaged by the explosion.

The IDF then arrested Eisha and two of his brothers, Barakat and Sameh.

Israeli soldiers then harassed many of Eisha's neighbors, including another brother, Itzhak. Soldiers entered Itzhak's home and smashed windows and light switches with their rifle butts, ransacked and overturned cupboards, and cut their phone cable. It may be months before the Itzhak family can have their cable replaced, if ever.

Rebuilding: Several days later, CPTers joined 40 to 50 Hebronite volunteers who were helping rebuild Eisha's home. One worker said, "In the afternoons, sometimes 300 [Palestinian] Hebronites are out here helping. This is the Muslim way."

Another added, "We have done more work here in two days than can usually be done in a month. We will be finished in just 10 days."

Palestinian workers continued building throughout the afternoon, not knowing whether the Israeli authorities would again destroy the home.

CPT members Cliff Kindy (North Manchester, Ind.), Kathleen Kern (Webster, N.Y.), Wendy Lehman (Kidron, Ohio) and Jeff Heie (Washington) live with Palestinian families in Hebron, a town of 130,000 some 30 miles southwest of Jerusalem.

MCC closes Thailand office

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—After 17 years of continuous service in Thailand, Mennonite Central Committee closed its office there May 31.

Ann Martin, MCC East Asia secretary, cites several reasons for the closure. "After MCC Thailand's main focus on refugee repatriation ended in 1990, no strong vision or call for cooperation emerged from conversations with Thai partners," says Martin.

MCC's main partner in Thailand, the Church of Christ of Thailand, no longer requests MCC volunteers. The church now has Thai staff who work in rural and urban community development, Martin explains, and notes that MCC applauds this approach.

In the past the MCC office in Thailand also provided logistical support to MCC workers and programs in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam that is

Jan Siemens (MCC)

Improving economy: *A woman sells brooms on a Bangkok, Thailand, street corner.*

no longer needed. Earlier, due to those countries' international isolation and war-damaged infrastructures, the Thailand office had provided assistance for everything from booking flights to arranging for medical treatment for workers to purchasing equipment for development projects.

But improving economies and better relations between Western and Indochina governments have eliminated many of these difficulties.

"And, although Thailand has certainly not alleviated poverty, it is comparatively better off than its neighbors and has a wealth of national organizations committed to development and justice issues. This has made it increasingly difficult to justify MCC presence in Thailand," says Martin.

> **"Although Thailand has certainly not alleviated poverty, it is comparatively better off than its neighbors."**
>
> ***Ann Martin***

New options: The office closure frees MCC resources for work in poorer Asian countries, including cooperating with Christians in China on rural development and social services, funding community development projects in Cambodia and exploring options for peace work in Myanmar (formerly Burma), which is embroiled in civil war.

MCC will continue to maintain ties to the Church of Christ of Thailand by providing some funding through 1996 and by continuing to invite young Thai Christians to participate in the International Visitor Exchange Program. Self-Help Crafts of the World, an MCC program, will continue to generate income for poor Thais, including ethnic minority groups, by purchasing and marketing their crafts.

One MCC worker, Max Ediger, will remain in Thailand but will focus on Myanmar. Ediger has lived in Thailand since 1978.

MCC workers first went to Thailand in 1960 to do medical and agricultural work. Over the years, MCC in Thailand ministered with local churches to the poor in Thailand and assisted refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. From 1963 to 1977 MCC placed no workers in Thailand. Since 1978, 32 MCC workers have served in Thailand.

Former German base now hosts Menno fellowship

Winnipeg (CMC)—A fellowship of Mennonites has sprung up in what was once a major Nazi military installation. After World War II the installation in Niedergorsdorf, in what used to be East Germany, was taken over by the Russian army until their withdrawal in 1993.

For the past two years these 88,000 acres of barracks, hangars and other buildings have stood empty, falling into disrepair and neglect.

Now, however, new life is coming to this former military installation. Barracks bought by a German businessman have been converted into apartments where thousands of Aussiedler, people of German background from the former Soviet Union, have taken up residence. Among these Aussiedler are about 85 people who have formed a Mennonite fellowship, joining together to worship God.

Berlin
Niedergorsdorf
GERMANY

In May, Helmut Harder, general secretary of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, and Irma, his wife, visited Niedergorsdorf to meet this small congregation and to view the site where CMC workers will arrive in fall.

Currently Karl and Kathy Koop, Mennonite Central Committee workers in the area, provide leadership to the congregation. However, their work focuses on settlement problems, providing some assistance with

Mennonite Central Committee has contributed $6,000 to Mennonite Brethren Church of Zaire efforts to prevent future epidemics of the Ebola virus that recently killed some 200 people in Zaire.

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Mennonite Central Committee has created a World Wide Web site on the Internet. Browsers can find general information about MCC, press releases indexed by date and subject, the "Ottawa Notebook," the video resource catalog and essays on various MCC-related topics. The address of the MCC site is http://www.mennonitecc.ca/mcc/ It can also be found by using many of the standard indexes to the World Wide Web.

• • •

The inter-Mennonite women's conference "Unity and Uniqueness in Christ" lost the support of Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia. At a special meeting May 1, MCC B.C. withdrew support for the conference that was held May 26-28 in Abbotsford, B.C. MCC B.C. director Ed Janzen says the implicit threat from some local church leaders that support for MCC would suffer if sponsorship continued "forced the agency to respond." Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Mennonite Brethren pastors contacted MCC, concerned about the "New Age" tones of a liturgy that included a "ritual of cleansing smoke," incense, the ringing of bells or a gong and references to Mother Earth. Vange Thiessen, chair of the MCC B.C. Women's Concerns Committee, says, "The liturgy was not going to be used at our conference." She notes that many Christian traditions use bells and incense, and objects to the way the liturgy was judged "without thinking about the cultural context in which it was written." (*Gospel Herald*)

Buskers (musicians, artists, mimes, jugglers, magicians ...) are needed for Wichita '95, July 25-30. Contact Twila Lebold at (519) 725-5225.

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Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury, Alta., sponsored a forum June 1 on the use of gambling as a means of raising funds for community and government projects. Roy Brassard, a member of Alberta's legislature, told participants that Albertans spend $50 million a week on gambling. He said the figure is growing. The church's Women in Mission group decided to take a stand against gambling and designated two members to write their views to the Alberta government.

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Several hundred poverty-stricken farmers living on Mennonite colonies in Mexico will receive emergency assistance from Mennonite Central Committee Canada. "They are desperate," says Abe Warkentin, director of the MCC Kanadier Concerns program, adding that $25,250 has been allocated for emergency food aid, seeding supplies, fertilizer and fuel. Colonies selected to receive this assistance are located in the Nuevo Casas Grandes area in Chihuahua and in the Chavi area in Campeche. "We do not have a plan to help all the needy colonies in Mexico—the needs are simply too great and complex," says Warkentin. MCC hopes to place workers with an agriculture background in both areas, if funding is approved. Warkentin says that the Mennonite colonies will have to make changes to become economically viable. He says farmers there are beginning to question the church leaders' opposition to trucks, electricity, radios and rubber tires on farm implements.

material needs if required and helping the immigrants find jobs, learn German and understand the German social system.

Last year, out of a desire for pastoral leadership, the Aussiedler congregation invited CMC to send a worker to provide pastoral services, Bible training, counseling and assistance with family problems, particularly youth difficulties. In response, CMC is finalizing arrangements for Walter and Annie Thielmann of Clearbrook, B.C., to undertake a two-year assignment in Niedergorsdorf beginning this fall. *Roma Quapp*

New Mennonite church in Ukraine seeks help

RUSSIA
Moscow
UKRAINE
Kiev
Zaporozhye

Winnipeg (CMC)—"I pray every day and I read the Bible, but I don't understand what I'm reading," said one member of a newly formed group of Mennonites in Zaporozhye, Ukraine. This group consists of some 40 people of Mennonite background who, after decades of living in a context of spiritual deprivation, now find themselves free to worship God.

The years of oppression have left their mark, says Helmut Harder, general secretary of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC), who recently returned from Zaporozhye. Some people remain fearful of going public with church affiliation, while many who are committed to forming a church struggle with questions of authority. For those raised on the infallibility of the Communist Party, transferring allegiance to the Bible presents a challenge, and accepting the authority of the Bible over other books of religion or mythology cannot be taken for granted.

Harder, together with Irma, his wife, spent 10 days in Ukraine in May, meeting with the Zaporozhye group's leaders and giving presentations about Mennonite origins, Mennonite faith, and the history and future of Mennonites in the former Soviet Union. He found a diverse group, ranging in age from 20 to 80, with many well-educated people in good positions.

The group is looking to the CMC in cooperation with the Commission on Overseas Mission to provide guidance, direction and teaching. Currently Oleg Penner, 65, a coroner, preaches on occasion while Heinz Janzen, a high school teacher in his mid-40s, acts as congregational chair. Frank and Nettie Dyck, a retired couple from Calgary who serve with European Christian Mission, provide interim leadership. Services are held in a mixture of German and Russian, with German being the language of choice for worship and translation into Russian provided.

The group in Zaporozhye formed with the help of "Wiedergeburt," an organization dedicated to the promotion of German language and culture. The organization is not religious, but wants to foster German churches and denominations. Harder says that for some in the Zaporozhye group, hearing and learning the German language is as much a motivation for attending church as is the desire to worship God.

> **"I pray every day and I read the Bible, but I don't understand what I'm reading."**
> ***a Zaporozhye Mennonite***

There is also in Zaporozhye a hunger for knowledge of the Bible and for spiritual development. Yuri Makazan, an engineer and businessman who is not of Mennonite background, hosts a weekly Bible study group in his home. Many older people in surrounding villages are now beginning to identify themselves as Mennonites, often after 50 years of being unable to attend church. Tante Frieda, an older woman from Niederchortitza, pleaded, "Come, teach me how to pray. I want to be baptized. I would be so happy for visits once a month. There's plenty of work here." *Roma Quapp*

NDC processes St. Paul, fosters mission churches

Freeman, S.D. (GCMC)—Home missions dominated the annual meeting of Northern District Conference (NDC), held here June 15-18. Delegates passed a budget that included a $12,000 increase in funding to home missions, and participated in a first-ever mission banquet, while cutting one mission church out of the budget entirely.

In March of this year, the NDC home missions committee voted to recommend ending the conference's financial support of St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship because of that church's decision to accept gay and lesbian people as members. The budget presented for delegate action at the 1995 NDC meeting reflected this.

The home missions emphasis was set by the conference theme, "I Will Build My Church," based both on Jesus' words in Matthew 16:18, and on a verse referred to several times as "Menno Simons' favorite," 1 Corinthians 3:11: "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Conference minister Robert Hartzler declared in the opening sermon, "We have a mandate to make disciples, as in Matthew 28:18-20, not solve the world's problems. We should be focusing on 'congregational reproduction'—every congregation having a new one."

Special speaker Don Jacobs of Landisville, Pa., also spoke on the mission theme in four presentations. Jacobs directs the Mennonite Christian Leadership Foundation.

On Friday afternoon, following the home missions committee's report, Helen and Alberto Quintela of St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship were given a chance to speak to delegates, responding in part to the omission of St. Paul from the mission banquet program.

The Quintelas expressed their appreciation for the letters, many containing contributions, that had poured into the St. Paul Fellowship following the funding-cut recommendation, and for Hartzler's mediating presence. Both declared the fellowship's continuing commitment to the poor and marginalized on St. Paul's west side, as well as to involvement with Mennonite Voluntary Service and other church programs.

At the end of her remarks, Helen Quintela, pastor at St. Paul Fellowship, referred to "the road from Moab to Bethlehem" in the Book of Ruth. "On that road, Naomi released Ruth," she said. "Tomorrow, if the budget is approved, I am released as an official church planter for Northern District Conference."

However, Helen said, Ruth would not be released. Helen then read the familiar passage from Ruth: "Do not press me to leave you. Where you go, I will go ... your people shall be my people, and your God my God."

Your God will be my God: *Helen Quintela*

Alberto added, "When I joined the Mennonite church, it was with the belief that I was called to stand with the poor, oppressed and marginalized, and I still believe that. As a nonethnic Mennonite, I also believed that 'Mennonites don't cast out their own.'

"In St. Paul, we see the 'children' who have made difficult choices regarding their sexuality. I come from a fundamentalist background, so this has not always been easy for me to accept. But these are the ones we are called to love."

Support: The open mike time following the Quintelas' presentation elicited almost unanimously supportive responses. "This [St. Paul] is a group committed to Christian fellowship," said Larry Eisenbeis, Marion, S.D., chair of the home missions committee. "They are as Anabaptist as anyone, even more so than some. This represents a new relationship—we are not throwing them out."

The Sunday worship service, led by the host church, Hutterthal Mennonite of Freeman, concluded with the passing of the peace pipe from outgoing NDC president Norman Hofer to new president Steve Ratzlaff, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Lincoln, Neb.

Years ago, Northern Cheyenne Mennonite leader Joe Walks Along presented the pipe to then-NDC president Harold Thieszen. It has been used in place of a gavel at NDC sessions ever since. *Melanie A. Zuercher*

First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan., will celebrate its 50th anniversary July 24.

• • •

A reunion for those who served in 1-W service at General Rose Memorial Hospital, Denver, will be held Aug. 16-18, 1996, at Willow Valley Resort, Lancaster, Pa. Contact Wilmer E. Kolb, 508 Pushtown Road, Spring City, PA 19475, (610) 469-6419.

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Graduate students in nursing may apply for loans from Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Board of Missions. Contact Amy Herr, MHS, 2160 Lincoln Highway East, Box 6, Lancaster, PA 17602-1150, (717) 293-7125.

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A Church Leaders Conference will be held at Bluffton (Ohio) College Oct. 10-11. The theme will be "Leadership for the 21st Century." Contact Randy Keeler, campus pastor, at (419) 358-3219.

• • •

Colombian Mennonites have appealed to North American Mennonites to intervene on behalf of 18-year-old Luis Gabriel Caldas Leon, a Roman Catholic from Bogota, who has been imprisoned since June 10 because of his refusal to carry arms in Colombia's military. Justapaz, a Colombian Mennonite peace organization, has asked North Americans to write Colombia's president, asking that he recognize the right to conscientious objection and to intervene on Luis Gabriel Caldas Leon's behalf. The president's address is Excelentisimo Senor Presidente de la Republica Ernesto Samper Pizano, Palacio de Narino, Carrera 8, #7-40, Santafe de Bogota, D.C. Colombia.

This fall Raleigh, N.C., will have a new mediation service, "Change of Heart." The organization began through the Jubilee Peace Center, which Raleigh Mennonite Church founded last year. In addition to the new mediation service, the center also teaches conflict resolution skills to children, leads a summer peace camp, offers seminars on the biblical basis for peacemaking and lends out materials through a resource library.

• • •

An archivist at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., has detailed less than ideal relationships between Mennonites and Native peoples in the 1800s. His study, "Mississauga-Mennonite relations in the Upper Grand River Valley," was published in June in *Ontario History*. It reports that although Mennonites considered themselves superior to other settlers because they were interested in promoting peace and stability between aboriginal and settler populations, Mennonites actually participated in forcing the Mississaugas out of the area. Mennonite entrepreneur "Indian Sam" Eby established a distillery in 1804 at a Mississauga crossroads where he traded whiskey for furs from the Mississaugas. According to a petition submitted to the provincial legislature by fellow settlers in 1804, Eby's actions caused the Mississaugas to neglect familial responsibilities, including providing food for their children. The Mississaugas converted to Methodism and repudiated the use of liquor. A German immigrant to Waterloo reported that the Mississaugas he met there were "the most peaceable people, and a large number of them are Christians, of the Methodist sect," while Mennonites were "to a large extent totally without education, and religious fanatics besides, among whom the devil plays almost as important a role as the worship of God."

NGO heads re-examine role of development

Waterloo, Ont. (Meetinghouse)—Development must be redefined. This was the message heard at the international symposium on nongovernmental religious relief and development organizations (NGOs) at Conrad Grebel College June 4-6.

"Development is more than full stomachs, healthy bodies and educated minds," said anthropologist Paul Hiebert. "Religion is central to any lasting transformation."

"Our Christian identity is our single most important distinction," said Bryant L. Myers, a vice president at World Vision International. "Christian NGOs must remain who they are and be careful not to be co-opted [by government]."

Hiebert redefined development as addressing spiritual, social, cultural and psychological poverty. He defined development as "the movement of people, societies and cultures toward what God intended for them."

A seeming paradox is that increasing relief needs combined with decreasing government foreign aid may be a positive trend.

David C. Korten, president of People-Centered Development in New York, detailed instances of how foreign aid has been harmful or useless: "Bread for the World has been taking a hard look at foreign aid allocations for several years. The agency noted that of the total U.S. foreign aid budget of $15.2 billion for fiscal year 1994, only $8.3 billion makes even a pretense of being for development. The remainder is a combination of military aid, security-related economic aid, export promotion and other forms of nondevelopment spending."

He noted another problem with foreign aid, its flawed premise that poorer countries should be brought up to American standards. "We are the world's problem. Christian relief organizations were created to 'heal others.' Can they play a role in our major obligation [in 'developed' countries] to heal ourselves? There is no simple answer to that question."
Bertha Landers

An artist at work

Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker (MCC)

Reynaldo Acerico, 10, stands proudly by the drawings he created at the neighborhood library. Koinonia Library in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, opened in 1990 at the initiative of the neighborhood's 35-member Mennonite church.

Record

CBC—Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C.
EMM—Eastern Mennonite Missions
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

DEATHS

Melva Lehman, 83, of First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., died June 20. She served with the Commission on Overseas Mission in India from 1947 to 1967 and in Taiwan from 1977 to 1980. She also worked in Newfoundland with MCC.

Richard Yordy, 72, died May 21. He served many roles in the Mennonite Church, including serving as president of Goshen Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. He also served as pastor of two General Conference churches, St. Jacobs (Ont.) Church and First Church, Champaign-Urbana, Ill. Services were held at Foothills Church, Calgary, Alta., where he had been interim pastor for a year.

MINISTERS

Marvin Wall is serving as senior pastor at Bethel Bergthaler Church, Winkler, Man.

WORKERS

Bertha Beachy, Assembly Church, Goshen, Ind., will begin a three-year joint MCC and EMM term January 1996 in Somalia, where she will work as country representative. She previously served with EMM in Somalia and Kenya.

A. Juhnke

J. Juhnke

Barbara and **Mark Ewert**, Gospel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., are participating in MCC Canada's Native gardening program this summer.

Bentley Froese, Trinity Church, Calgary, Alta., is participating in MCC Canada's Native gardening program this summer.

Rod Janzen has been named male residence director at CBC.

Anna and **James Juhnke**, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., have been named Center Fellows at The Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Groups at Elizabethtown College for the 1995-96 school year. Anna will teach a course on contemporary Mennonite literature, and James will organize a reader's theater and give public lectures.

Aaron Kingsley, Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind., is participating in MCC Canada's Native gardening program this summer.

Lois and **Robert Neufeld** of Bright, Ont., are beginning six-year MCC terms in Zambia. They will be working as country co-representatives of Zambia and Angola. They are affiliated with West Philadelphia Fellowship.

Tamira Regier has been appointed associate dean of students for women at CBC.

Marcus Rempel, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, is participating in MCC Canada's Native gardening program this summer.

Chad Tiegen has been named male residence director at CBC.

John Wiebe

Jeremy Wiebe, Superb (Sask.) Church, is serving in MCC Canada's Native gardening program this summer.

John Wiebe is controller for CBC.

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Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., celebrated its 35th anniversary June 25. The choir of First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., joined the Maplewood choir in a service to commemorate the mother-daughter relationship of the two congregations.

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An American pastor and anti-war activist on his way to the Associated Church Press meetings in Ottawa in April was initially denied entry into Canada. *Canadian Catholic News* reports that Joe Roos, a member of the Sojourners community in Washington, has seven convictions for nonviolent protests. Roos said Canadian officials in Washington wanted him "to get police certificates from every city I've lived in since I was 18 years old." Officials also wanted letters "demonstrating that I have been rehabilitated." He was eventually allowed into Canada on a ministerial permit. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Apple Macintosh is Catholic, while IBM DOS is Protestant, according to Italian author Umberto Eco. *Christian Info News* recounts how Eco wrote recently about religious presuppositions he sees behind the two computer operating systems. The Mac is "cheerful, friendly, conciliatory," writes Eco. He says it belongs to the Counter-Reformation, telling the faithful "how they must proceed step by step to reach—if not the kingdom of heaven—that moment when their document is printed." It is a "catechistic" system, he says, where revelation comes through simple icons and everyone has the right to salvation. DOS, on the other hand, is Protestant, even Calvinist, he writes. DOS takes it for granted that not all can achieve salvation. "To make the program work, you need to interpret it yourself ... the user is closed within the loneliness of his own inner torment." (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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MCC Saskatchewan invites applications for the position of **executive director**. This position is responsible to the board of directors for carrying out the policies of MCCS and for its day-to-day operation. Leadership responsibilities include organizational vision and planning, personnel recruitment and development, resource development/constituency communication, liaison with other MCC groups.

Starting date negotiable, but preferably no later than Jan. 1, 1996. Application deadline: **Aug. 31**.

Please send letters of application, including a resume, salary expectations and the names of three references directly to **Peter H. Peters, MCCS Personnel Committee, Box 354, White City, SK S0G 5B0; (306) 781-2231**.

Goshen College announces a part-time position for softball coach for the 1995-96 school year. The person is responsible to coach and develop the women's softball program—recruit quality athletes within Goshen College guidelines, plan, organize and implement schedule and budget. Master's degree preferred, together with coaching experience suitable to the collegiate level. The load is concentrated between February and May, with about 15 percent contract load assigned. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resume and professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**. Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled.

Goshen College invites applications for the position of **director of student financial aid**, beginning Jan. 1, 1996. Reporting to the director of enrollment, the student financial aid director is a vital member of the enrollment management team. The director is responsible for managing all components of the student financial aid function and providing leadership for a professional and support staff of three people. Qualifications include a conviction for Mennonite higher education, success in leading and motivating others, related administrative skills and experience, and the ability to understand and use computer systems. Consideration will be given for previous student financial aid experience. Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send resume and three references to **Rich Gerig, Director of Enrollment, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526. Phone: (219) 535-7501, fax: (219) 535-7660.** Application deadline is **July 28 or until position is filled**.

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JULY 24-29, 1995

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission is accepting applications for a full-time **controller**, beginning work Aug. 1. Seeking a person committed to world mission with a B.A. in accounting. It is preferable that the applicant have two to four years experience in financial administration, be skilled in computer information and willing to do some fund raising.

Direct inquiries/resumes to **Garry Prieb, Executive Secretary, AIMM, 59466 C.R. 113, Elkhart, IN 46517; fax (219) 875-6567**; or call **(219) 875-5552** for an appointment.

PASTORS—LOOKING FOR ADVENTURE?

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Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship desires a full-time minister to fulfill a wide range of exciting pastoral responsibilities. Preaching, teaching, nurturing and administrative skills required. Physical and mental fortitude to slay spiritual complacency a plus.

Begin the first step of your urban adventure by sending resume to **Linda Headings, 652 Springs Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45255; (513) 753-5867.**

Goshen College foreign language department announces a full-time, potentially continuing position beginning August 1995. The teaching load includes **German** language (elementary, intermediate and advanced levels), German literature and culture. In addition the load will include one or two courses in another language or other subject fields. The candidate should have an advanced degree (Ph.D. preferred) in German language with study and experience in German language areas. Prior teaching experience at the college level is expected. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**. Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled.

Lead manager for **World Neighbors International Handcrafts,** Portland, Ore. Full-time or part-time, salaried position. Person will manage large, growing, volunteer-based Self-Help Crafts store. Retail experience required along with excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Managerial experience preferred.

Send resume with references **immediately** to **Philip Hostetler, Portland Mennonite Church, 1312 SE 35th Ave., Portland, OR 97214; (503) 234-0559 (day), (503) 232-6306 (evening).** Position opens end of August.

Non-classroom **teaching position** available at the **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center.** Primary duties include library supervision and tutoring individual students. This is a full-time voluntary service position. Housing, health insurance, all living expenses and a personal stipend are provided. Living quarters near school. Applicants with teacher training and experience will be given preference. Ten-month contract begins Aug. 21.

For more information or to request application materials, contact **Russel Liechty, Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; (312) 735-9304.**

Goshen College English department announces a full-time, one-year position for the 1995-96 academic year. Responsibilities include teaching general education writing courses, such as Writing about America and expository writing. Other assignments may include ESL composition, creative writing or English-teacher education. The candidate should have an advanced degree (Ph.D. preferred) in composition and rhetoric or literature. Prior teaching experience at the college level is expected. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.** Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled.

Goshen College chemistry and foods and nutrition department announces a full-time, one-year position in **foods and nutrition** for the 1995-96 academic year. The successful candidate should have a master's degree in nutrition and be a registered dietitian. The assignment will include teaching a full range of specialized nutrition courses (food science, advanced nutrition, meal management, food service systems, nutrition in disease), serving as the adviser to graduates seeking internships, and teaching general courses in health and nutrition. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Please send curriculum vitae and references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.** Screening of applicants begins immediately and the position remains open until filled.

The Presidential Search Committee for Goshen College seeks nominations and applications for the position of president

Goshen College, a Mennonite college, offers a Christian liberal-arts program on a small campus where Christian community, compassion and service are emphasized. This emphasis is rooted in the Anabaptist tradition.

A GC President should be a person with the strong
- Christian faith,
- academic vision,
- leadership skills,

necessary to guide the college into its second century of liberal arts education in a way that continues to embody its motto, *Culture for Service.*

The appointment is scheduled to begin with a six-month period of preparation from January through June 1996, with presidential responsibilities beginning on July 1, 1996.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Nominations and letters of inquiry will be held in confidence. Please send these by July 31 to:

Sherm Kauffman, Chair
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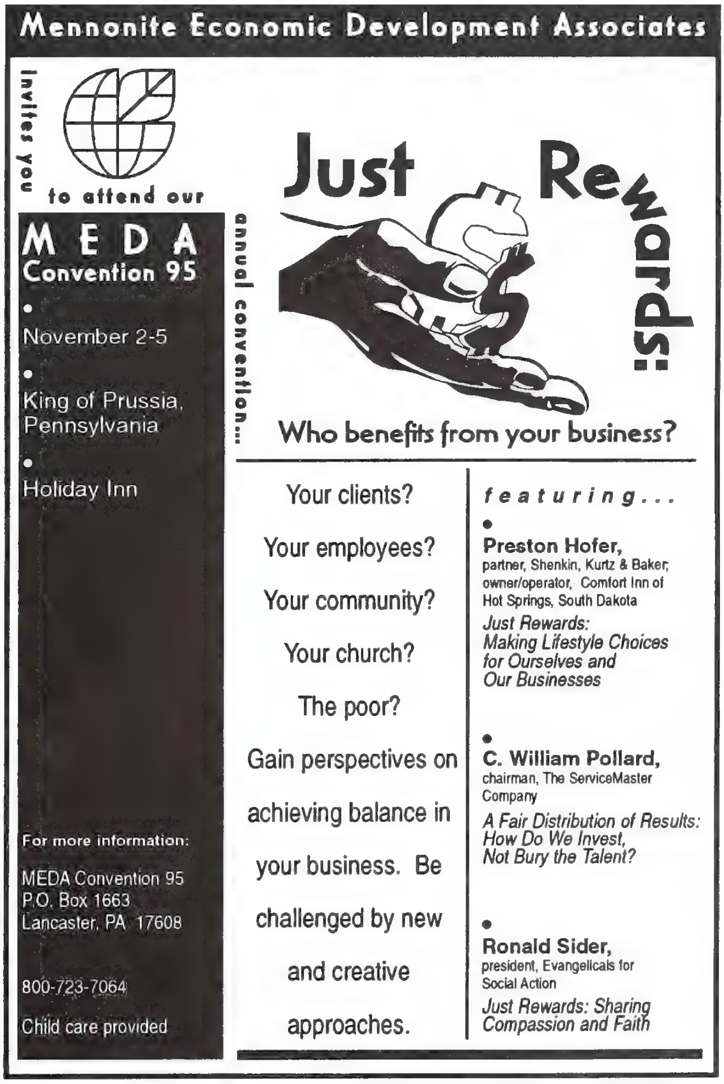

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- **Ronald Sider,** president, Evangelicals for Social Action
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BOOKS

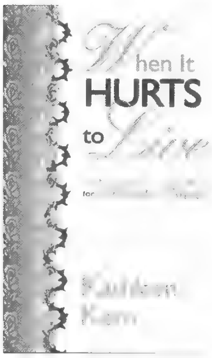
SCRIPTURE AND DEPRESSION

When It Hurts to Live *by Kathleen Kern (Faith & Life Press, 1994, 208 pages)*

Reviewed by Katie Funk Wiebe, Wichita, Kan.

The task of a devotional writer is to strengthen the faith of the reader and create a desire to seek God's presence.

Author Kathleen Kern's goal is to strengthen the faith of people suffering from depression. Kern addresses both the spiritual and psychological aspects of depression.



She writes from experience. She herself has suffered three major episodes of depression. Yet she writes as a Bible scholar, not as a therapist.

Each devotion has four parts. Kern begins each of the 40 devotions with a passage of Scripture that deals with the emotional/spiritual life.

Hagar, cast out by her mistress; Jacob, when he is told his son Joseph is probably dead; the lamentations of Jeremiah; and many others. Anyone suffering from depression should find comfort that sorrow and desolation have been part of the human condition from the beginning of time.

The Scripture is followed by a well-developed exposition of the story. Next comes the application of the truth of the Scripture to life.

A third part of each devotion is a group of questions to be answered, possibly by journaling. Here I had some difficulty seeing the role of some of the questions in devotional writing.

I read this book during a time when once again our family was facing a serious health crisis. I was looking for someone to guide me to the fount of greater strength, greater courage, greater hope. Instead this question section asked me to probe inside myself to find out what was going wrong there rather than to reach for God.

I was hoping the author would say at this point, "Here is how I or someone else was helped by this Scripture," and together search out the meaning of the incarnation for my need. When I hurt I don't like "need to" and "should" language. I was disappointed that the author keeps a distance between herself, her writing and the abyss that is the dwelling place of people who find it hurts to live.

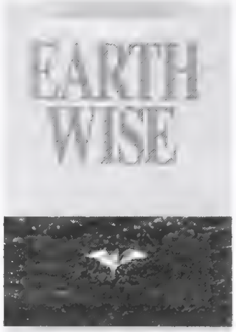
But the closing prayers were a great end to each reading. "God, my faith may be shaky and insubstantial, but you are real and strong. Give me the courage to live as you would have me live, and to die as you would have me die. Amen."

QUICK EARTH WISDOM

Earth-Wise: A Biblical Response to Environmental Issues *by Calvin B. DeWitt (CRC Publications, 1994, 86 pages)*

Reviewed by David E. Ortman, Seattle

One might overlook this small 86-page booklet. But like the mustard seed that contains within it the mustard tree, DeWitt has packed a wealth of insights into a small container of six chapters and a resources list.



Chapter two, on the "Seven Degradations of Creation," for example, notes that "while human beings are expected to be fruitful, so is the rest of creation: 'Let the water team with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky. ... Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth' (Genesis 1:20, 22)." Is it significant that the first command to be fruitful and multiply is given to the birds and fish? How are we helping the salmon or the spotted owl to be fruitful and multiply?

In chapter three, DeWitt asks whether Genesis 2:15 should be read, "And Jehovah God taketh the man and causeth him to rest in the garden of Eden, to serve it and to keep it," as in *Young's Literal Translation of the Bible: A Revised Edition.* Serving creation opens up new possibilities.

Chapter five covers raising environmental awareness in the church. It includes a process for developing your own group responses.

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Missing, however, as it is from nearly all books of this type, is any mention of the political realm or of the work over the last century of conservation and environmental groups. DeWitt seems intent on building the wall between church and state even higher, making sure that the former will have no impact on the latter when it comes to environmental issues.

Chapter six is an interesting attempt to respond to "stumbling blocks" such as, "This world is not my home, I'm just passing through" or, "Caring for creation is just a New-Age movement" or, "Caring for creation will lead to world government."

Each chapter ends with suggestions for group sessions. Check out *Earth-Wise* as a study group resource.

OPEN THE CHURCH TO ALL

Unexpected Guests at God's Banquet: Welcoming People with Disabilities into the Church *by Brett Webb-Mitchell (Crossroad, 1994, 194 pages)*

Reviewed by Marilyn Phemister, Larned, Kan.

What would you do if you had prepared a banquet, and everyone you invited refused to come?

When this happened in Jesus' parable of the great banquet, the host sent his servant into the streets with instructions to "bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame" (Luke 4:21). Webb-Mitchell takes this parable literally as God's command to bring people with disabilities into the church. Without them, the church cannot resemble the kingdom of God.

Unexpected Guests at God's Banquet offers a brief survey of society's varied perceptions and treatment of people with disabilities from the beginning of history to the present. It deals with the present in straight-to-the-point language: "isolated," "betrayed," "rejected," "ignored," "inhospitable" and "hostile." The author talks about an "angry division" and a "wounded relationship" between able-bodied people and those with disabilities. He tells of a diaspora of people with disabilities who have "run away from or been rejected by many congregations and parishes."

Although there is a fair amount of theoretical material in this book, I would call it a handbook. It offers ideas for changes in the various programs of the church, including the worship services, and a variety of activities to bring about acceptance of people with disabilities.

Unfortunately, the book is flawed by excessive repetition and numerous awkward or incorrect sentence constructions. It cries for more time with an editor. In spite of this, I recommend the book because of its content.

The timeliness of the topic, the insights offered and the practical suggestions make *Unexpected Guests at God's Banquet* an important book.

PEACE TO YOUTH

Peace: Just Live It! *by Christine Neufeld (Faith & Life Press, 1995, 104 pages)*

Reviewed by Joel Schroeder, Henderson, Neb.

One of the greatest challenges in the Mennonite church today is to share the values of the Bible and our Mennonite tradition with youth. This curriculum attempts to reintroduce the concept of shalom to high schoolers and to encourage them to consider peacemaking as a way of life.

PEACE
JUST LIVE IT!
A Challenge to Youth for the 21st Century

The writer makes the connection between the peace stance and other areas of life. She makes strong links between peace and God, self, family and others. After studying how peace can be interwoven in all areas of life, youth are challenged to put peacemaking into action. Ideas are suggested but youth are encouraged to develop their own personal action plan.

The use of active learning, small-group discussion and reproducible talk sheets helps get youth involved in the sessions. Also, the variety of activities in each session makes the curriculum suitable for a variety of teaching and learning styles.

I felt some of the activities were below the high-school level. But with several options, leaders are able to select activities to fit the group.

In considering the flow of the curriculum, my preference would be that sessions one and two be placed later in the curriculum after some groundwork is laid. For many youth, the meaning of shalom is not known and may hinder initial interest. Also, session two on Anabaptism would be more effective after the connection is made between biblical peace and the lives of the youth today.

Presenting the idea of God's peace, shalom, is a challenge and may often sound boring to youth. However, if youth are shown how the concept of peace is relevant to them and how it can be used in their world, as this curriculum attempts to do, youth may "Just Live It!"

Resources

- **New poster from Mennonite Central Committee** has a message from Micah 6:8, with bright colors and international faces reminding us we are called to serve God and each other. Free from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151; MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381; or your nearest MCC office.
- **Nurturing Doubt: From Mennonite Missionary to Anthropologist in the Argentine Chaco** by Elmer S. Miller (University of Illinois Press, 1995, $17.50 U.S. paper) tells of the author's changes as he relates to the Toba people, first as missionary, then as anthropologist.
- **Visioning for God's Shalom** is a new video curriculum published by Friendship Press and adapted from a Mennonite youth video curriculum, "Whole People Whole Earth." The new set includes video, leader's guide and student material for four sessions. Order for $29.95 ($42.95 Cdn.) from MBM Media Ministries, 1-800-999-3534; or from Friendship Press.
- **Understanding Ministerial Leadership,** edited by John A. Esau (Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1995, $15 U.S. plus $3 shipping), contains 10 essays on the meaning and practice of Christian ministry. Order from IMS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

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Editorial

What should happen at Wichita

People ask me what will happen at Wichita '95, the joint convention of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church, to be held July 25-30 in Wichita, Kan. I answer, I don't know.

If I don't know what *will* happen, then what *should* happen?

The Book of Acts records a conference in Jerusalem at which there was "much debate" (15:7). Various factions had formed, taking sides against one another. Peter, Barnabas and Paul testified about the Spirit coming to the Gentiles (15:7-12). Then James referred to Scripture (15:16-18) and concluded that "we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God" (15:19). In the end the participants in the conference write that it "seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (15:28).

This account shows us some elements of decision making that we may find helpful. First, **debate**. We need to talk. Too many judgments are made about others because we refuse to speak directly to people. Although I recognize the need for having separate sessions to discuss integration at Wichita '95, I regret that GCs and MCs will not be speaking directly to one another. I hope this will happen in other settings at the convention.

We carry around too many stereotypes about others. We need to stop carrying them and begin speaking them to find out if they are true. The distances between GCs and MCs persist because we don't spend time with one another and talk plainly.

Second, **testimony**. Peter, Barnabas and Paul talked about what they had witnessed among Gentiles. We should hear what people have experienced where integration has taken place. I just returned from the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference's (PSMC) annual assembly. While the leadership had had some problems getting organized, the spirit of the meeting was congenial. It was impossible to tell consistently who was GC and who was MC. They were now both.

Bringing together people from both denominations had obviously enriched the fellowship, not to mention the ministry of the conference. And the presence of African-American, Hispanic, Chinese, Hmong as well as Anglo participants helped proclaim that "Mennonite" is a faith, not an ethnic designation.

Third, **Scripture**. We should search the Scriptures together. When we read the New Testament, we do not witness a group of believers retreating from the population to carry on its own traditions. Instead, the Spirit seems to move believers out to new areas to carry their faith to new peoples. And as new kinds of people join, the church has to look at what are the essentials.

If the Mennonite church wants to grow, it must welcome new kinds of people and face the difficult task of redefining who we are and what are the essentials of our faith. We may be surprised. Servant Community Church, which joined the PSMC this year, is made up almost exclusively of people with no church background. Yet last fall a caravan of older Mennonites came to these new believers and shared some of their customs (like quilt making and four-part singing) as well as their wisdom. But most of all, says Servant Community Church's pastor, Ken Ashman, "they shared themselves." Many older church members are more open to change and to outsiders than those of us who are middle-aged.

Fourth, **prayer**. The participants of that Jerusalem conference in Acts 15 both listened to the Holy Spirit and exercised their reason (it "seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us"). While we need to talk, testify and study, we also need to be quiet and listen for God's voice. In regard to the question of integration, we need to lay aside our desires, our fears and our agenda and ask, What is God's will?

It will help us to look at the "Vision: Healing and Hope" resolution also coming to delegates at Wichita. This statement says that we will need "the power of the Holy Spirit" if we are to "grow as communities of grace, joy and peace."

Those of us who gather at Wichita '95—and those who gather elsewhere—need to face this crossroads in the life of our churches with the expectation that the Holy Spirit can show us how we should proceed. We will need to debate, testify, study the Scriptures and—perhaps most of all—pray. *Gordon Houser*

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Lessons from Hiroshima

Prologue

Fifty years ago, on Aug. 6, the *Enola Gay* dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. In this issue we ask, What does that event mean for us today?

John K. Stoner writes about the burden of Hiroshima (page 3), how the decision to use nuclear weapons has had an effect on our society's growing violence.

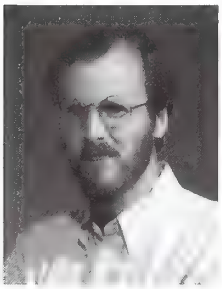
How do Christians remain faithful in a war zone? Pentecostal pastor Aleksandar Mitrovic faces this struggle in the former Yugoslavia (page 6).

Colman McCarthy, a syndicated columnist with the *Washington Post*, tells how he found openness to having peace taught in various contexts (page 7). Perhaps Mennonites have something to learn from his example.

Mission workers Betty Hochstetler and Bill Derksen have been traveling to various congregations in North America and offer their observations on changes they have seen in the Mennonite church (page 9).

John K. Stoner expands on the theme of his other article with a Bible study on Jesus' response to the disciples who wanted to call down fire from heaven (page 10).

Our financial columnist J.B. Miller looks at Matthew 25 and points out an emphasis often ignored (page 11).



Anyone who met Ted Risingsun came away impressed with his humility, his wisdom and his humor. He was a man of integrity, a Christian worth emulating. Read Malcolm Wenger's tribute on page 12. *gh*

Next issue: Media literacy

Cover: Photo by Religious News Service

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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What should we learn from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, 50 years ago?

The burden of Hiroshima

John K. Stoner

If there are such things as ghosts,' says a Japanese woman in Andrew H. Leighton's essay, 'That Day at Hiroshima,' 'why don't they haunt the Americans?'" With these words John Bradley begins the preface to his anthology *Atomic Ghost* (Coffee House Press, 1995).

There are such things as spirits, and Americans are haunted by the spirit of Hiroshima. Moreover, the haunting is all the more real and devastating for being unrecognized.

August 6, 1995, is the 50th anniversary of the American bombing of Hiroshima, which killed 130,000 men, women and children.

"True," you say, "but do we have to talk about that?"

Yes, we do have to talk about that. This is an important anniversary, and we have to talk about it for the sake of our lives, our souls and our future. If there is to be any future, we have to talk about it.

Let's begin at the beginning. Why did you ask, "But do we have to talk about that?" Why did you have trouble even starting to read this article with Hiroshima in the title?

I am pleased if these were not your reactions. If you can honestly say that you had no such thoughts, then you are interested without further persuasion in what follows. But I must report that my 35 years of paying attention to the atomic ghost in American society have convinced me that most Americans are avoiding, consciously or unconsciously, the ghost of Hiroshima.

The shadow of Hiroshima lies over our lives, we are haunted by it, we are being devastated by it, and we are avoiding it like a dog with rabies.

The bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City was only the most recent fallout from Hiroshima. We are a society that for 50 years has believed that the world can be improved by the use of ultimate destructive force. That belief in itself is astonishing. But even more preposterous is to believe in the redemptive power of ultimate violence and not expect disruptive consequences in our culture. This is not possible.

It is not possible because the truth lies in a different direction. The truth lies in the direction Jesus pointed toward nonviolence, but we are a society that does not like the direction Jesus pointed. This is a serious indictment, but we face serious problems and we need serious diagnosis.

Civil disobedience: Despite the voices of many who pose as spokespeople for Jesus, American society is not in trouble because of homosexuality and pacifism. We are not falling apart because men love men too much. We are self-destructing because men kill men too much.

According to Jesus, any killing is too much. According to our leaders and laws, killing is necessary and mandatory. This is our choice. In such a situation only by civil disobedience can we even begin to obey Jesus.

Bombing to death tens of thousands of innocent people in a moment is inflammatory behavior. Shall we speak of it only in subdued tones—even prefer silence to painful words? Is avoidance the best response we can muster?

The prophet Jeremiah warned of those who would "heal the wound of my people lightly, saying 'peace, peace' when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11). Forgive me for not joining those who would paper over the gaping pit of Hiroshima and

When the church turns two-kingdom theology into double-standard morality it parts company with Jesus.

> ***The rash of domestic violence in the United States today, from violence against women and children to street gangs and militia madness, is rooted in Hiroshima.***

pretend that everything is OK, while we go on coddling our nuclear arsenal with laws, taxes and justifications, while we go on killing the children of the world with smaller bombs and rapacious greed.

Jesus pointed humanity beyond the idolatry of national ambition and patriotic fervor. He rejected the lust for power that defines the rulers of the Gentiles (Mark 10:42-45) and called on people to follow his alternative, the power of compassionate service.

This call to nonviolent living was given to all people: "He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me'" (Mark 8:34).

"The crowd" does not exclude kings, presidents, legislators and judges. This is the evangelistic call. It goes to all, not just some. There may be two kingdoms, indeed there are. But there are not two ways to the truth and the life. Jesus is the one way. When the church turns two-kingdom theology into double-standard morality it parts company with Jesus.

When the United States made the nuclear bomb its weapon of choice in the struggle against evil, it rejected the way of Jesus and erected an idol in place of the God of salvation. Such a choice has consequences. We are seeing those consequences. We may well be displeased with them, but we should not be surprised.

The rash of domestic violence in the United States today, from violence against women and children to street gangs and militia madness, is rooted in Hiroshima as surely as water comes from the ocean. And just as predictably it will lead to future use of nuclear weapons, as surely as water returns to the ocean. There is an indissoluble link between state-sanctioned violence and domestic violence. To think that either one can be averted or corrected while the other is ignored or embraced is illusory.

Political relevance: When Jesus said that he was the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6), he was not describing a little sideshow while the main event goes on somewhere else. His call to

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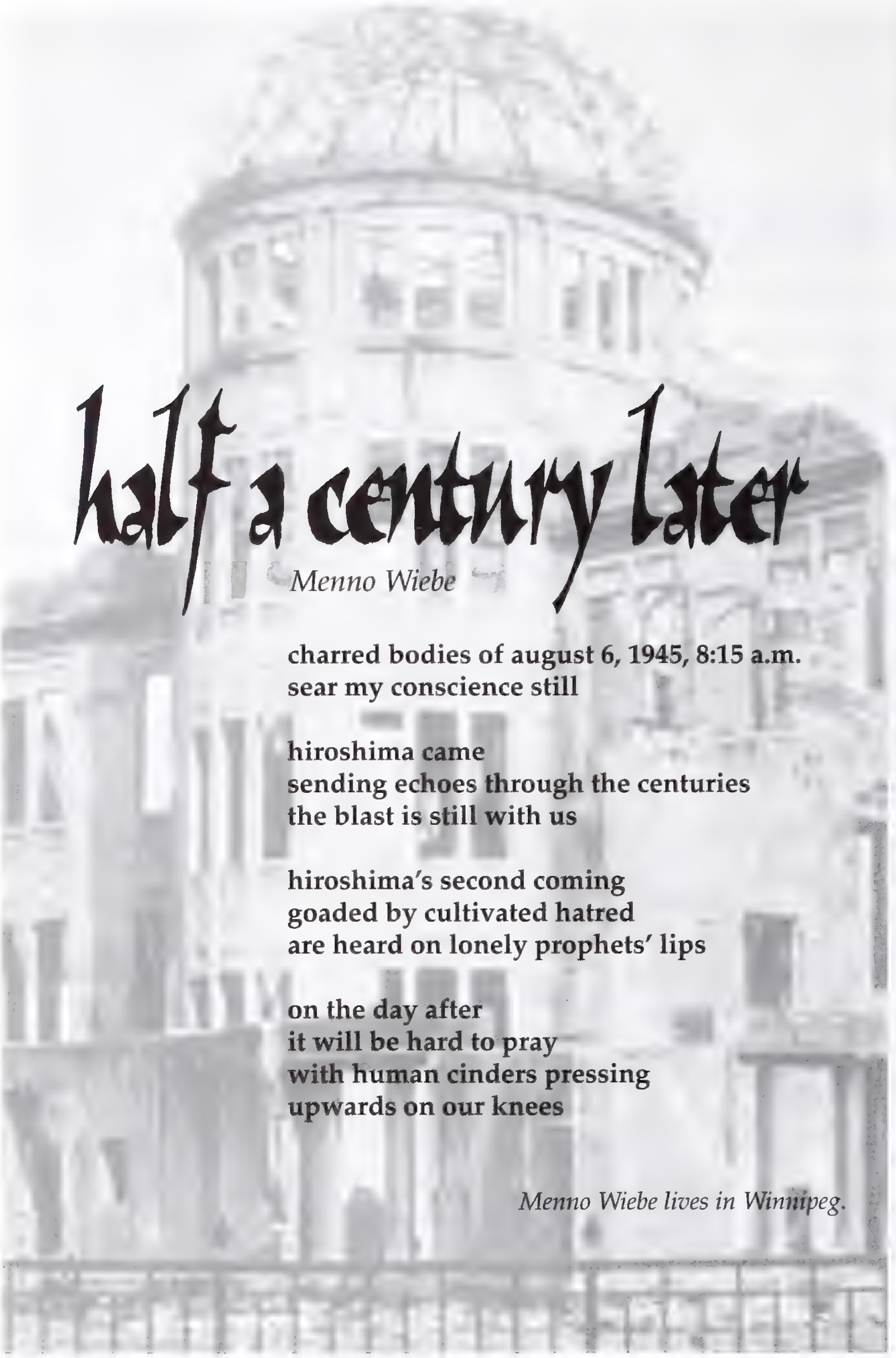

half a century later

Menno Wiebe

charred bodies of august 6, 1945, 8:15 a.m.
sear my conscience still

hiroshima came
sending echoes through the centuries
the blast is still with us

hiroshima's second coming
goaded by cultivated hatred
are heard on lonely prophets' lips

on the day after
it will be hard to pray
with human cinders pressing
upwards on our knees

Menno Wiebe lives in Winnipeg.

> ***We are burdened by Hiroshima because we resist the truth that the spirit of nuclear weapons is idolatrous, blasphemous and criminal—but legal.***

"love your enemies" (Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:35) is God's challenge to kings, presidents, premiers and senators as well as husbands, wives, children and teenagers. This is the political relevance of the gospel. We are not looking, really, at a question of *whether* governments, patriarchs, potentates and the rest of us will accept Jesus' way as the true way. They and we will. That is the future. It is only a question of *when.* The former we cannot decide. The latter we can. That is our choice.

We are burdened by Hiroshima because we resist the truth that the spirit of nuclear weapons is idolatrous, blasphemous and criminal—but legal. We give allegiance to national leaders and laws that legalize the nuclear empire and turn a deaf ear to Jesus and God. When what is immoral is the only thing that is legal, then what is illegal has become what is moral. To say "yes" to Jesus we must be prepared to say "no" to the state. To place ourselves on God's side we must be prepared to cross a line where to enter in God's name has been declared an act of trespass. The resurrection itself was illegal—from a grave sealed by the Romans against exit, Jesus moved into space all of us now inhabit. Will we follow him into the future?

John K. Stoner is coordinator for New Call to Peacemaking. He lives in Akron, Pa.

To break or to court

David Janzen

Cowboys and Plains Indians had different ways of taming horses. The ranchers' technique was called "breaking in" a horse. To do this someone with rodeo skills would ride a bucking wild horse that a circle of cowboys held fast by lariat ropes. The idea was to break the horse's will, to make it know domination and accept submission. A painful bit would be put into the horse's mouth to make it stop or turn. Then the horse could be trained in obedience.

The Plains Indian had a completely different approach and goal. He would take plenty of time in the pen to "court" his horse, gradually coming closer to get the horse to accept his presence, to accept a halter and finally to accept a rider. No saddle was used. Never was the horse startled or forced against its will. A unique relationship grew between them, sensitive to each other's signals and moods. The horse and rider became so bonded that they could ride into a buffalo hunt without the rider even holding the reins. With both hands free for the bow and arrow, the rider directed the horse at full gallop just by leaning his body and pressing his knees. A horse treated in this way is capable of great loyalty.

Love is the only power that can change humans without breaking them. God, who made us, does not need to destroy creation in order to redeem it.

David Janzen is a member of Reba Place Fellowship in Evanston, Ill. Reprinted from Mennonite Central Committee's Peace Office Newsletter *(July/August 1993).*

The gospel of peace in a war zone

A Pentecostal pastor asks Christians to help his church with costly prayer.

In the early days of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, young men from Aleksandar Mitrovic's church, Christ's Pentecostal Church in Novi Sad, were being drafted and sent to fight in Croatia. "We had up to then presented biblical pacifism in a theoretical way. When war came, it was very different," Aleksandar says. "At the beginning, we were careful what to say to these young men when they asked what to do. We explained options to them. We didn't tell them directly not to go."

The whole gospel: *Aleksandar Mitrovic*

Then Aleksandar received a letter from one of the young men who had gone into the army. This young Christian had refused an order to participate in an attack. He had said simply, "I am a Christian. I don't want to kill anybody." Even when an officer threatened to kill him on the spot, the young man refused to go. "You can shoot me if you want to," he said, pointing to heaven. "I know where I live." Pronouncing the young Christian crazy, the officer waved him out of the way.

Aleksandar visited this "brother" and the officer at the front. Over time, Aleksandar says, the officer came to respect the young man, giving him orders that kept him out of the fighting. Other soldiers began to ask questions about Jesus, and some became pacifist believers themselves.

Even when an officer threatened to kill him on the spot, the young man refused to go. "You can shoot me if you want to," he said, pointing to heaven. "I know where I live."

From that time on, Aleksandar says, "we preached biblical pacifism systematically and radically." Evangelism events organized by his church in the city of Novi Sad have had a dramatically positive result, offering the whole gospel of Jesus Christ, a gospel of new birth, of forgiveness and of love transcending ethnic division. Aleksandar was asked after one of his rallies, "Where have you been?"

His church in Novi Sad has members from Croat, Serb, Bosnian Muslim, Hungarian and other backgrounds. Aleksandar sees his church —in its work with refugees from Croatia and Bosnia, and in its very existence as a community—as offering a vision of an alternative to division and hatred.

Aleksandar supports efforts toward peace by Mennonite Central Committee. He attended a meeting organized by MCC in Vienna in 1993 for religious leaders from Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia. "It was wonderful," he says. "We talked about a better way to handle the conflict. We were allowed to explain what we believe. It had good results. It was a time to pray together ... for our own people and for each other's people."

Efforts like these toward dialogue and healing are what the church should be encouraging in the former Yugoslavia, Aleksandar says. Military and political solutions aren't adequate, he says, because "the real problem isn't the borders. The problem is in the relationships."

Sanctions, blaming and threats of military action against Serbia, says Aleksandar, work to the disadvantage of the ministry of his church. Serbs regard Protestant, including Pentecostal, churches as tied to the West. "Serbs, as a people, experience the West as their enemy now. Serbs ask how the West can come to us with weapons in one hand and the Bible in the other," he says.

Aleksandar invites North Americans to support pacifist churches and the cause of peace in the former Yugoslavia. He appeals not for casual but for costly prayer for the people of his country, the kind of prayer that will keep them in our hearts, not get them off our minds.

This article is from the Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center.

give peace a place in the curriculum

The author found more openness to peace teaching than most people expect.

Colman McCarthy

Can peace be taught? And then learned?

When I asked myself those questions 10 years ago, I responded like a journalist. Phone a few academic experts, get their readings and then I'd have my answers. But after phoning the experts and listening to them talk much and say little, I decided to do the kind of legwork and personal involvement that truly gets at the truth. I went to the school nearest my office in downtown Washington and offered my services as a volunteer teacher of peace.

The principal and faculty welcomed me, as did the students. That semester, 25 juniors and seniors enrolled in my course "Alternatives to Violence." They were able to grasp intellectually what they already had absorbed emotionally: the haunting awareness of their threatened future, of their present engulfed by excessive military, environmental and family violence, and of their nation's past record of nine declared and 135 undeclared wars—like Grenada, Libya, Panama and the Persian Gulf. The students loved the course, and I cherished their company.

Since that happy beginning, I took "Alternatives to Violence" to four universities (American, Georgetown, Maryland and Georgetown Law School) and two more high schools. In 10 years I've taught more than 3,000 students. With all of them I emphasized one theme: alternatives to violence exist and, if individuals and nations can organize themselves properly, nonviolent force is always stronger than violent force.

Some students open their minds to this immediately. They understand Gandhi: "Nonviolence is the weapon of the strong." They believe Martin Luther King Jr.: "The choice is not between violence and nonviolence but between nonviolence and nonexistence."

Other students have doubts that I encourage them to express. They do, repeatedly. Nonviolence and pacifism are beautiful theories and ideals, they tell me, but in the real world are the muggers and international despots.

All I asked of the "realists" was to think about life's two risks. Do you depend on violence or nonviolence to create peace? Not just peace in some vague "out there" among governments but peace in our homes, where spouse and child abuse are at record highs, and peace in our schools, where teenage suicide is rampant, and peace in our neighborhoods, where 25 million U.S. households have guns, and peace on our planet, where 142 nations are spending $900 billion this year on arms and armies and where 1987 saw more wars and conflicts than any previous year in history.

Peace through violence has failed. Nearly 80 million have been killed in wars since 1900, a 500 percent increase over the 19th century. About 40,000 people are killed a month in more than 40 wars and conflicts from the Middle East, Iran and Iraq, to Northern Ireland. More than 10,000 Americans are killed in handgun homicides annually. Those who defend violent solutions have some large numbers of deaths to defend.

Students are hungry to learn nonviolence. They understand it is much more than a noble ideal; it is also a basic survival skill. Learning nonviolence means that we dedicate our hearts, minds, time and money to a commitment that the force of love, the force of truth, the force of justice and the force of organized resistance to corrupt power is always more effective, moral and enduring than the force of fists, guns, armies and nukes.

Yet we still resist. Theodore Roszak explains: The usual pattern seems to be that people give nonviolence two weeks to solve their problem and then decide it has failed. Then they go on with violence for the next hundred years and it seems never to fail or be rejected.

As a student you have a moral right to courses in peace. If your school doesn't offer them or has too few, contact me at the Center for Teaching Peace and we can work to reform your school.

Let's not give peace a chance, let's give it a place in the curriculum.

Colman McCarthy, a syndicated columnist with the Washington Post, *is the founder and director of the Center for Teaching Peace , 4501 Van Ness St., N.W., Washington, DC 20016; (202) 537-1372.*

Letters

LIKES SUGGESTED NAME

I would like to affirm a name for the Mennonite church suggested by Geraldine Harder (June 27 issue, page 9), "Mennonite Church of Christ." This is a good suggestion because it puts the emphasis on Christ. It also calls us a church rather than a conference. This name is fitting whether you talk merger or some other federation or association of Anabaptists.

Our local church in Meridian, Miss., would then be known as Jubilee Mennonite Church of Christ.

May we continue to call for prayer as Wichita '95 takes place. *Ernie Neufeld, Meridian, Miss.*

RESPONSES ON COMMUNION

Greetings of peace and joy from Fukuoka, Japan. Thanks for your good work with *The Mennonite.*

We want to respond briefly to your questionnaire regarding Communion.

1. How many times per year? The churches we have served in Japan celebrate Communion the first Sunday of each month. At present we are happy with this frequency.

2. Foot washing? We don't practice it. We've experienced it a number of times but don't know how it can be made spiritually meaningful for us today.

3. Should children be invited to celebrate Communion? Only those who have consciously and voluntarily put their faith in Jesus Christ and confessed that faith publicly through baptism. This is based on our biblical understanding of the body of Christ, and it is the body of Christ that celebrates Communion. There are other ways we as the church and as families can make small children who believe in and love Jesus feel welcome and include them in church activities.

4. Themes other than Jesus' death in Communion services? The way this question is phrased already invites misunderstanding. The report on the meeting at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary uses the same unfortunate wording when it says that "the death of Jesus is only one of a number of Communion themes." Both the timing and the words of Jesus when he gave the bread and wine to his disciples indicate that Jesus' death for our sins is central to the celebration of Communion. 1 Corinthians 11:26 says, "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." I have participated in Communion services where no mention was made of Christ's death for our sins, and I went away feeling empty and unsatisfied.

But when we celebrate Communion we remember the rich salvation that is ours through the death and resurrection of our Lord, including the fellowship of the community of faith, the living hope of Christ's return, and the joyous anticipation of celebrating Communion in the presence of Christ in the eternal kingdom. However, the Lord's Supper in a particular and concrete way is the reminder that all these blessings were made available to us through the death and resurrection of our Lord. In other words, the death of Jesus Christ is not one theme among several but the wellspring from which the others flow. *Mary and Peter Derksen, Fukuoka, Japan*

Our Mennonite faith was founded on adult baptism. Many of our ancestors gave their lives for this belief. And this belief is based on Scripture. We base our baptism on confession of faith. The commitment is in the baptism. And only committed believers are qualified for Communion.

True believers are those who accept the Scripture as the divinely inspired and infallible Word of God, perfect or holy. If you cannot believe that, then you should not partake of Communion. It would be better for that person to abstain than to partake of it in an unworthy manner.

Donald Steelberg ("Seven Reasons for Inviting Children to Take Communion," Feb. 28 issue) has committed a grave sin by speaking against Scripture and adding to the teaching of Scripture (Revelation 22:18-19). Christ said in John 12:48, "He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge: the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day." That means the whole Scripture.

The writer claims that acceptance of children at Communion is based on family tradition of the Jewish seder. That may be so, but that was the old covenant. It is also true that Jesus used the Passover celebration to connect the old covenant with the new. But the condition changed. The old was based on the family and physical nourishment, but the new is based on believing, or spiritual nourishment.

The writer talks about understanding tradition being the key to the participation of children. Scripture does not tell the believer to practice the tradition of the first century but to obey Scripture as it is written.

Many churches today practice Communion in the morning service. It is all right to invite unbelievers to the morning worship service, but it is not all right for unbelievers to be present at Communion, even children. For Communion is the holiest sacrament given to us by Christ.

My baptism was in the morning worship service, and everybody was welcome to attend. But Communion was in the afternoon and only for believers. That type of a service was a spiritual highlight in my life.

As Christ broke and served the bread and the wine, so also the male leaders, the pastor and lay ministers should serve the bread and the cup. Women are not permitted to teach or have authority over men (1 Timothy 2:12). *Abe Janzen, Coaldale, Alta.*

Editor's note: *Anyone who wants a longer paper on this subject by Abe Janzen may write him c/o* The Mennonite.

E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR MISSIONARIES

We received the Feb. 28 issue on April 14. Thanks much; it is a great link for us in Germany. The United States is in the news here, but Canada hardly.

We are having a fascinating time in Berlin, especially in connection with the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. Since I recall those times vividly, having been in the midst of it as a young boy, it adds to the drama now.

Earlier I had sent you our new address (June 13 issue, page 9). Please add our CompuServe address: 73571,3020. Thanks a lot for your ministry through *The Mennonite. Dietrich and Dorothy Rempel, mission workers in Berlin, Germany*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome but must be signed. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

Speaking out

Changes in the North American church

Observations from two overseas mission workers

Betty Hochstetler and Bill Derksen

Changes are more noticeable when you've been away. We have observed accelerated change in the North American Mennonite churches over the last five years.

There are signs of life and signs of decay, and each of these reflects something about our participation in God's kingdom. In recording what we have noticed we are not making judgment calls but trying to encourage our fellow sojourners as we all become aware of a global mission for our time.

Some trivia to begin with: Carpets in churches were red in the '60s, tan in the '70s, green in the '80s and blue-gray in the '90s. Most churches do not have regularly scheduled Sunday evening services, opting for a combination of small-group meetings, special features and teaching sessions instead. The Sunday school hour and worship hour are readily inverted, and adult classes are pulled together for common sessions. And not to be outdone by the carpets are the creative banners decorating our sanctuary walls. Children's departments are full of color and equipment. Dedicated teachers devote much time to teaching Sunday school. The new *Jubilee* series is being enthusiastically embraced.

Photocopy machines, VCRs and microwave ovens are among the indispensable tools that fill our church offices and kitchens. They parallel an increase in the number of "professionals" that staff the churches. Besides a pastor and custodian, churches employ administrative assistants, youth pastors, ministers of music, ministers of Christian education and counselors.

Multimillion dollar facilities are on the rise. It seems significant that elders boards are also having to deal more and more with business matters. Larger budgets are required to maintain and secure (and insure) the holdings. This contrasts sharply with many Mennonites in economically depressed areas where food and shelter for today are the preoccupation.

International travel: In our church visits we have enjoyed hospitality. Many people want to know about the church overseas and are faithful prayers. International travel is commonplace, thus requiring less "show-and-tell" reporting from missionaries. Our mission agencies along with Menno Travel Service and other organizations sponsor tours and service projects through which contact can be made on the international scene. International students in our colleges and seminaries provide opportunities for personal friendships. Conferences and seminars promote awareness of areas in which Mennonite mission work is carried out. All these broaden our horizons and increase our awareness of differences in culture, religious expression and communication.

But the level of global awareness varies from person to person. We have encountered extreme cases where defending the American flag seemed more important than celebrating the body of Christ, which transcends all national loyalties. On the other hand, some people have made astute comments about the need for globalization at home. Making sound financial investments, knowing what we don't believe, attractively packaging our programs, and distrusting leadership are among the preoccupations that keep our vision from expanding.

Gone are the days when we put maps on bulletin boards with strings fanning out to all the locations where we have mission work. They gave the impression that we had spanned the globe with the gospel. But mission is not simply a geographical matter. There are pockets of nostalgia in the church that want to revive colonial-type mission expansion. These also seem unwilling to welcome strangers, unknown situations and unfamiliar foods. Mennonite World Conference hardly catches their attention.

Now is the time to look for the body of Christ in the world. The mission of the church is an awareness of God working through various channels in all cultures and our willing participation in that work.

One way this global perspective can be fostered is taking our international encounters seriously. Business meetings, educational contacts or youth exchanges can become natural points of contact between cultures. Where a congregation has a natural point of contact, it can send people into that setting in order to participate in that group's church life. Our congregations may also receive someone from the counterpart community into our own in order to draw that person into congregational life and mission. These should not be seen as short-term projects but as shifts toward interconnectedness, where we become rooted in each other's faith journey. Are we ready to receive missioning and hear foreign accents among us, even from the pulpit? Participation in the kingdom is a global affair, whether the specific setting be local or overseas.

> ***Participation in the kingdom is a global affair, whether the specific setting be local or overseas.***

We offer these observations in order to stimulate discussion to help open our doors to God's global work of salvation. We want to fight the virus of lethargy that prevents us from seeing a vision of partnership, a vision that will draw us closer to becoming an inclusive community where people from this culture and from other cultures work at our common mission. There may be nothing attractive, easy, secure, comfortable, convenient, strategically efficient, economical or self-fulfilling about that mission. But it belongs to God's way of making peace.

Betty Hochstetler is a mission worker in Brazil with Mennonite Board of Missions. Bill Derksen is a mission worker in Japan with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite.*

Fire from heaven in 1995?

Jesus rebuked his disciples who wanted to use violence against their enemies.

John K. Stoner

From the biblical point of view, violence can only be stopped at its point of origin, at the human heart. Nobody asked Jesus, "Is it a sin to build a nuclear weapon?" But do we seriously believe that Jesus has not spoken a relevant word on officially sanctioned violence just because he never used the word "nuclear"?

Jesus was asked, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" (Luke 9:54). There was no technology in sight, just a question of the spirit, the idea, the notion of burning the enemy.

What happens to a society that places at the center of its national policy the affirmation, technology and practice of calling down fire from heaven? What happens to a country that continues to do this for 50 years with an unbroken string of legal, economic and military decisions supporting the practice?

Human wickedness: Jesus turned and rebuked them. For what? For proposing a morally and spiritually unacceptable response to human wickedness.

A similar rebuke on another occasion comes to mind. Mark tells us that Jesus rebuked Peter in the strongest terms, even calling him Satan, when Peter objected to Jesus' teaching that he would suffer at the hands of the authorities (Mark 8:33). The connection between the two rebukes is that Jesus had determined in his mind to make a nonviolent response to evil, to overcome evil with good, and he rebuked attitudes that resisted that response of nonviolence.

This commitment to nonviolence was central in the mission and message of Jesus. Departures from, or failures to understand this, were not peripheral incidents but crises that called into question the heart of his mission to demonstrate that the power of transforming love, not the power of violence, was God's way of overcoming evil. Related ideas come through in Luke 9 and 22, where Jesus counters the disciples' hunger for worldly power with his own images of power in the child and in service to others.

What is at stake when the disciples of Jesus propose the use of violence to punish evildoers? At stake is the cross, the central paradigm of the Christian faith. The question posed is whether salvation will come to the world through violent power or nonviolent power. If Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem to die, refusing to retaliate against the violence of established rule and legitimate authority when it is turned on him, it will not do to have his disciples along the way calling down fire from heaven when they are threatened or offended.

> ***We cannot avoid reaping on the home front the violence we plan for distant lands.***

The disciples were proposing a response to evil that they considered necessary and effective. Fire from heaven would be inescapable, it would apply overwhelming force and, coming from heaven, would appear to have divine origin and sanction. It would also be deadly—homicidal.

It was a method of dealing with conflict that cut off the possibility of dialogue, persuasion, negotiation or human encounter. It enforced peace through strength. Jesus would not permit it.

How Jesus treated Samaritans: The disciples thought that they had good biblical grounds for calling down fire from heaven in the Old Testament story of Elijah. Some Christians today still turn to the Old Testament to justify violent response to evil; they say Jesus' response here meant only that it was the wrong time to burn the Samaritans, not the wrong method of dealing with conflict.

Jesus went on to demonstrate a different response to Samaritans. In Luke we read that Jesus affirmed a Samaritan's moral behavior as an example of how to love one's neighbor (Luke 10:30-37). The response of Jesus to the Samaritans who were despised and excluded by his own culture was to choose a Samaritan as a model of how to please God. By doing this he unleashed power for transformation in both Jewish and Samaritan minds. Who can calculate the long-term impact of this challenging witness to uncomfortable truth? It reshaped social and religious definitions of goodness and injected a new dynamic into Jewish-Samaritan relations.

In another encounter Jesus enhanced the dignity of a Samaritan woman other men in his culture would have shunned and condemned (John 4:4-42). He deliberately spoke to the woman, thereby breaking social and religious law. He asked the woman to give him water, thereby affirming her importance to him, recognizing his need for her, and her capacity to help him. He had a serious theological and moral discussion with her, thereby disobeying rabbinic taboos against including women in serious conversation. He accepted her testimony to others that he spoke the truth of God, and allowed his message to go out through her witness. It was an unusual way of responding to the deep-seated Jewish-Samaritan conflict. It opened space for healing of ethnic, religious, social and gender conflict. It was an alternative to fire from heaven.

The way of the cross: So how do we suppose Jesus would respond today when his disciples on this side of the cross call down fire from heaven in our nuclear bombs and destroy Japanese cities, tens of thousands of men, women and children, mostly civilians, many Christians? What does this do to the way of the cross Christians profess to represent?

What does it mean for our souls that we have become willing to call down fire from heaven and have made the capacity to call down fire from heaven the centerpiece of our national security doctrine? What does this do to every person who consents to it, pays their taxes for it and remains silent as generation after generation of nuclear missiles and weapons are developed?

continued on next page

Fiscal health

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J.B. Miller is vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Are we generous givers?

Instead of always emphasizing the stewardship side of our finances, we should emphasize generosity.

J.B. Miller

A Pontius Puddle cartoon in *The Mennonite* (May 23 issue, page 12) caught my eye. Pontius says to his pastor, " I can send a subject into an unconscious state by saying a single word." The pastor says, "That's nothing. As a pastor I can do the same thing with an entire congregation." "Wow," Pontius says. "What's the word?" The pastor says, "Stewardship."

Stewardship gets bad press because too often it is couched in attempts to get people to give more money to our congregations or a favorite charity. We tell people they can be good stewards by supporting our favorite cause. But is that really stewardship or is it just looking out for our vested interests? The teachings of Christ are clear that we need to be both good stewards and generous givers—people who help others in need. In fact, some of the teachings are so clear they frighten me.

One such passage is Matthew 25. Matthew 25:14-30 is the portion often read during a stewardship message. It's the story of the overseer who went away and left talents with his staff, then judged their behavior by what they did with the talents while he was away. The poor steward was cast into outer darkness, which is not a very pleasant thought.

The image of the poor steward is a powerful passage, but the passage that follows it is even more pointed: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'" (31-34).

What is going to separate the sheep from the goats? Is it following certain rules, supporting particular political agenda or even supporting our favorite charities? No.

Christ says that at the time of judgment we will be separated by how we responded to the needs around us: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me" (35-36).

Pointing fingers: These are challenging words. For some of us, it has been easier to point fingers at the rich in our midst and say, "You should give more" or, "How can you spend all that money on those expensive toys?" Is it not time to stop pointing fingers and ask ourselves, "Am I feeding the hungry, visiting the imprisoned, giving water to the thirsty, and welcoming the stranger?"

What I am suggesting is that instead of always emphasizing the stewardship side of our finances we instead emphasize generosity. The question is not just, "Am I being a good steward?" but, "What am I doing with my resources to make sure I am feeding the hungry?"

> ***We are going to be judged by how we have helped the less fortunate, and this is a teaching that can be followed by both the rich and the poor.***

The Matthew 25 passage can be a wonderful guide for both the poor and the rich. Neither group gets off the hook. We are going to be judged by how we have helped the less fortunate, and this is a teaching that can be followed by both the rich and the poor. We talk a great deal about stewardship in the Mennonite church, which is important. Stewardship is foundational for us as Christians. But some Mennonites are not more generous because they equate stewardship with stinginess. Are we so concerned about not giving to people in need because they aren't good managers or because they might be eligible for government help that we miss the point of being generous givers and therefore miss the blessings that God has in store for us?

BIBLE *continued*

What happens to respect for life in society when, at the apex of national policy, at the epitome of national will and at the summit of national education and industry sits the mushroom cloud of indiscriminate death and suicidal slaughter?

It is vain to imagine that school violence, family violence, street violence, workplace violence and gender violence are going to be allayed if the overriding violence at the level of national policy is left intact. To expect that to happen may be joining the false prophets spoken of by Jeremiah who "have treated the wound of my people carelessly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11).

Peace is a seamless garment. We cannot avoid reaping on the home front the violence we plan for distant lands. The fire from heaven spreads until it envelops everything. Jesus knew that and cut it off at the root. He responded to Samaritans with initiatives of forgiveness and acceptance. He challenges us to do the same.

John Stoner is coordinator of New Call to Peacemaking. He lives in Akron, Pa.

High Hawk

A tribute to a Cheyenne warrior for the Lord

Malcolm Wenger

One night as Ted Risingsun was driving his pickup with his 12-year-old grandson, the boy asked, "Grandfather, did you ever kill a man?"

Ted hesitated. "Yes," he finally replied, "and not only one. But I don't want you to kill people."

"Don't worry about me, grandfather."

Ted, or Aenohe Oshaa'eho'oestse (High Hawk), had not ceased to be a warrior, but he had chosen to follow a different leader and use different weapons.

"We were in the [U.S.] Army together, but now we are in God's army," says Joe Walks Along, pastor at Lame Deer (Mont.) Mennonite Church.

Ted, a leader among Native American Mennonites, died April 5. He was 68.

At his funeral at White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church in Busby, Mont., a military honor guard of Cheyenne veterans stood at attention on the hillside splashed with melting snow as the casket was carried from the church.

They were acknowledging Ted's service in the Army at the end of World War II and in the Korean War—in spite of his later efforts to steer youth away from the military.

Ted chided Mennonite missionaries for not speaking out more clearly on the biblical teachings of peace and loving one's enemies. He participated in Northern District Conference "boot camps" designed to offer young men options other than violence in serving their country.

He told them that when he was in foxholes in Korea he knew that his mother was praying for his safety and credited those prayers for his survival. Then he realized some of the enemy soldiers he was trying to kill also had mothers and fathers praying for their safety.

He said he had been brainwashed to think of the enemy as animals. He also remembered the peace teaching he received at Bethel Academy in North Newton, Kan., and Freeman (S.D.) Academy.

During those dark days in Korea, Ted turned to alcohol to push back memories of the horrible things a soldier must do and experience. But in return for temporary forgetfulness, alcohol took a grip on him, leaving scars not only on his life but on the lives of those dear to him. The times of victory seemed always swallowed up by failure.

Suicide: Years of ups and downs ended in a despair that brought back memories of an attempt at suicide in Korea and the temptation to try it again. Recovering from a hangover, he cried out to God, "You've got to help me. I just can't do it myself."

The power of Christ: *Ted Risingsun*

He credits the power of Jesus Christ with loosening the grip of alcohol when he was helpless to achieve lasting sobriety.

Ted left his mark on many projects and people. He was a staffperson for the Northern Cheyenne Mennonite churches and a member of the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council.

Ted encouraged the Christians on the Northern Cheyenne reservation to respect each other and work together. There is now increasing cooperation between Catholics, Mennonites, Pentecostals, Baptists and Lutherans.

Reconciliation was important to him. He even found it possible to say a good word for Christopher Columbus because his coming, with all its pain and hurt, opened the way for Native people to hear the Good News of Christ.

Linguist Danny Alford, who worked with Ted to develop a bilingual education program for Cheyenne schools, wrote, "Through Ted I learned how Christianity and 'Cheyenne-ness,' which might be seen as opposites by some, can coexist ... without denial of either."

Ted's vision formed the Cheyenne Christian Education Project, which has produced portions of Scripture in what one might call "Today's Cheyenne Version," using contemporary Cheyenne phrases.

Ted and T.R. Hughes, a Lutheran businessman from Seward, Neb., whom Ted adopted as a brother, helped the Cheyenne bring buffalo back to the reservation. Hughes gave animals from his own herd, and he and Ted worked hard on the tribal buffalo committee to make the herd viable.

"I can still see the glow on the face of an old Cheyenne brother as he said, 'Buffalo calves are again being born on Cheyenne land,'" T.R. Hughes said.

Ted knew that to heal the losses of his people they needed to take more control of what happened to their children. He worked hard to bring schools under Cheyenne control. His success caught the attention of other tribes.

Ted is survived by his wife, Imogene, of Busby; two daughters, Myra Jackson of Bartlesville, Okla., and Ruth Phillips of Hebron, Md.; three step-children, Corlett Teeth, Earlene Clown and Julia Blackwolf, all of Busby; two sisters, Louise Fisher of Busby and Maretha Charette of Lame Deer; and 10 grandchildren.

Malcolm Wenger has worked with Native people in the United States and Canada since 1944. He lives in Newton, Kan.

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Forgive and Remember: Ted Risingsun's Story of Fort Robinson is a 22-minute video available for free loan or for purchase ($10 plus postage) from the Commission on Home Ministries, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100.

AMBS window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Annual Report 1995

God's guiding hand and the support of the church

In a chapel service at the beginning of second semester, I reflected on Jesus' words in Mark 2: "No one pours new wine into old wineskins.... No, he pours new wine into new wineskins."

I acknowledged in that service, "There is no life and no growth without change, and yet it is so hard sometimes to welcome change." These words have been especially true this year as we felt the loss of AMBS President Marlin E. Miller, who died November 3, 1994.

Other changes also have come during this year. Willard Swartley became dean in February, and Gerald Gerbrandt became interim president July 1. A search committee is working to fill the position of a longer-term president for AMBS. I will return to my teaching position when the school year begins in September.

Although these changes are significant, we continue to be guided by careful long-range planning begun under Marlin's leadership. The board of directors, faculty, and administrative team have depth of experience and strong commitment to the mission of the seminary. Undergirding our life and work is God's guiding hand and the support of the church. We have felt both with renewed strength in these last months.

During the year we celebrated the beginning success of the Partners for Ministry campaign. In September we dedicated the Lambright Center, a learning center created in the former dormitory. This first-fruit of the campaign has already made a remarkable contribution to our community life.

In March we reached the half-way point of the campaign: six million dollars in letters of intent and contributions. We are thankful for this support in the effort to strengthen the seminary's financial base.

Howard Zehr

One goal in the campaign is to build connections between the seminary and the people and congregations in the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church. For AMBS to be your seminary, we must do more than provide courses in Elkhart, Indiana.

One way we reach beyond the campus is through opportunities to teach and preach in congregational, conference and retreat settings. In the last six months, for example, members of the AMBS faculty have led Holy Week services in Orville, Ohio, and Edmonton, Alberta; presented a series of lectures at Hesston College; taught in churches as close as Goshen, Ind., and as far away as Uruguay. In just these few months, faculty have been called to preach and teach in communities in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Ohio, Illinois, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and many more. This gives faculty an invaluable opportunity to learn about the church we serve. We trust it also gives church members a better understanding of those who help shape the ministry of the church through the teaching and learning which happen at AMBS.

I want to express deep thanks for your prayers, counsel, and encouragement. We enter a new year trusting that God continues to lead us.

As God calls people to minister, we ask you to pray that AMBS will be empowered by the spirit of Christ to prepare them to serve with grace and hope.

- Gayle Gerber Koontz,
acting president

Inside

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Commencement

AMBS Panorama

Begin the new year at AMBS

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Forty-two students graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on May 26. Sixteen received the Master of Divinity; 18 the Master of Arts in Theological Studies; four the Master of Arts in Peace Studies and four the Certificate in Theological Studies.

Nineteen graduates—almost half of the class—have pastoral ministry assignments or are seeking positions in pastoral ministry.

Susan I. Miller Balzer MATS in Theology and Ethics. *Not pictured.* Will continue with peace and justice work, homemaking and writing. "My seminary friends and my educational experiences from seminary classes are lifetime treasures." Susan is married to Harlin D. Balzer and they have three children. She is the daughter of Viola M. Miller of Fayette, Ohio, and is a member of Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

Pauline Bauman M.Div. Plans in process. "I have appreciated the privilege of eing with Christian companions in an academic setting where I could integrate biblical studies, theological questions, and life experiences." Pauline is the daughter of Aden and Rebecca Bauman of Elmira, Ont. She is a member of Guelph Mennonite Church, Guelph, Ont.

Miriam Burkholder MAPS. *Not pictured.* Will complete course work this summer and continue work as a nurse. Mim appreciated "a time and space to name and wrestle with questions of life and faith." Mim is a member of Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa., and is the daughter of Edgar and Grace Burkholder of Chambersburg.

Taylor Burton-Edwards MAPS. *Not pictured.* Pastor of Tyner United Methodist Church, Tyner, Ind. "Your love for the God of Peace—in heart, mind, voices—has nourished me deeply. I cannot say thanks to you—or to God—enough." Taylor is married to Grace Burton-Edwards and they have one son. He is the son of Gaila R. Edwards of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Rachel Clemens M.Div. Will continue working as a family therapist while exploring other options for ministry in the church. "Studying at AMBS, I have experienced renewal and growth. I have explored my call and considered faithful ways of integrating theology and experience." Rachel is the daughter of Stanley and Joenita Clemens, Bluffton, Ohio. She is a member of Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.) and an associate member of Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

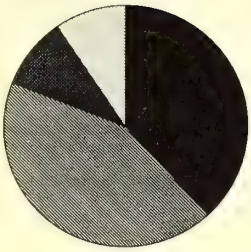
Bill Derksen M.Div. Will continue working with church colleagues in Japan as a Commission on Overseas Missions missionary. Most meaningful to Bill has been "'Discovering' third Isaiah, Gelassenheit, Mennonite historiography, enjoyable Hebrew, Prairie Street house, local answers to cosmic questions, soccer on Friday afternoons, fabulous people who became friends." Bill is the son of Peter and Mary Derksen of Abbotsford, B.C. He is a member of Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C., and Oita Mennonite Church, Oita, Japan.

Terry Diener M.Div. Minister of Pastoral Care and Counseling, Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. "I have appreciated growing in my understanding of Scripture and its relevance to many life situations. The classroom settings were both challenging and affirming." Terry is married to Julie Diener and they have three children. He is the son of Erma Diener, Hutchinson, Kan., and the late Willard Diener.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Pauline Bauman, Rachel Clemens, Bill Derksen, Terry Diener, Mary Dyck.

Mary Dyck M.Div. Chaplain at the Schowalter Villa Retirement Center, Hesston, Kan. "The knowledge gained through studies has promoted personal growth and better prepared me to serve God in ministry. I appreciated the friendships I was able to nurture within the seminary and church communities. It was especially meaningful to cultivate friendships with students from foreign countries." Mary is a member of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man. She has six children and six grandchildren.



Programs completed by 1995 graduates

- ■ Master of Divinity - 16
- ☐ Master of Arts in Theological Studies - 18
- ▨ Master of Arts in Peace Studies - 4
- ☐ Certificate in Theological Studies - 4

Anita Owen Fenstermacher MATS in Christian Spirituality. *Not pictured.* Will continue work in spiritual formation in United Methodist and other churches. "At AMBS I found a place where resources of learning are directed toward a comprehensive background in Christian Spirituality. I deeply appreciate the counsel and caring I found at AMBS." Anita is married to Dr. Robert E. Fenstermacher and they have five adult children. She is the daughter of Zenith Wilkes Owen of Indianapolis, Ind., and is a member of Grace United Methodist Church, South Bend, Ind.

David Graham MATS in Theology and Ethics. *Not pictured.* Plans in process. "Learning about the Mennonite peace position has been most meaningful to me here at seminary." David is the son of Duane and Kathleen Graham, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.

Lily May R. Grove Certificate in Theological Studies. Plans in process. "Seminary has provided excellent resources —library, teachers, staff, students, summer courses— all have enabled me to develop my theological thinking and beliefs." Lil is married to David Grove and they have four adult children. She is a member of Hagerman Mennonite Church, Markham, Ont.

Dorothy Beachy Hathaway Certificate in Theological Studies. *Not pictured.* Plans in process. "Studying in a new discipline has opened up new possibilities for ministry for me. I look forward to continued involvements in congregational life." Dorothy is married to Melvin Hathaway and is the daughter of Alvie and Elsie Beachy, Lancaster, Pa.

David Heusinkveld M.Div. Pastor at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind. "At AMBS I rediscovered the importance of friends and family, learned pastoring involves more than I imagined, and found seminary helps immensely in that call." David is married to Gail Heusinkveld and they have two children. He is the son of Ed and Helen Heusinkveld, West Des Moines, Iowa.

Betty Falb Hochstetler Certificate in Theological Studies. Will continue work in North Brazil with Associação Evangélica Menonita and Mennonite Board of Missions. Betty appreciated "joyous and thoughtful and emotional worship of God in community of faith, the renewed discipline of scripture and prayer, stimulating classroom and informal discussions." Betty and Otis Hochstetler have two children. She is a member of Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, and Conceição de Araguaia, Pará Brazil. Her parents are Milton and Esther Falb, Orrville, Ohio.

Pearl Ann Hoover M.Div. Plans in process. "Seminary has been a place for growth, healing and preparation. My faith has deepened, my respect for the Bible strengthened, my love for the church renewed." Pearl is the daughter of Herbert and Anna Mary Hoover, New Carlisle, Ohio. She is a member of Huber Mennonite Church, New Carlisle, and attends Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Stephen Hord Certificate in Theological Studies. *Not pictured.* Will begin a master's program in marriage and family therapy at Abilene (Texas) Christian University. "My three semesters at AMBS have challenged me to think deeply about my faith, the Scriptures, and how I am to live out my vocation." Stephen is married to Barb Vigh-Hord and they have two children. He is a member of Tri-Lakes Community Church, Bristol, Ind., and is the son of Jim and Dotty Hord, Austin, Texas.

Carol Sue Hostetler M.Div. Will complete a year of clinical pastoral education as a chaplain at Bronson Methodist Hospital, Kalamazoo, Mich. "I have valued the interaction with students and faculty/staff as we have shared together on this journey of faith." Carol Sue is the daughter of Ada Hostetler, El Paso, Ill., and the late Maynard Hostetler. She is a member of Metamora (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Steve Echols

Left to right: David Heusinkveld, Betty Hochstetler, Pearl Hoover, Carol Sue Hostetler, Lily May Grove

Masha Kabattchenco-Sternik MATS in Biblical Studies. Plans in process. "What I learned in classes and the community experience at AMBS" was most meaningful to Masha. She is the daughter of Mikhail and Irina Kabattchenco of Moscow, Russia. She is a member of St. Kosma and Domian Church, Moscow.

Robert Keck M.Div. *Not pictured.* Pastor of Sweetser United Methodist Church, Sweetser, Ind. "Being able to appreciate the diversity in which God is able to work and still allow us to do ministry in his name," is what Bob found most meaningful. Bob is married to Susan Keck and they have eight children. He is a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, Elkhart. His parents are Raymond and Elsie Keck, Walkerton, Ind.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Masha Kabattchenko-Sternik, Robert Keener, Erwin Klassen, Cleo Koop, Marvin Koop

Robert Keener M.Div. Continue as pastor of East Goshen (Ind.) Mennonite Church. Most meaningful for Bob has been "the invitation to grow in awareness of God, of self, of others; the courage to ask hard questions, to cry, to laugh, to think deeply." Bob is married to Rhoda Keener and they have three children. His parents are Samuel L. and Esther Keener.

Erwin Klassen MATS in Christian Spirituality. Plans in process. "I came to get answers and discern what I should do. Instead, I learned to ask, to think, and to be. For this I'm grateful." Erwin is married to LaVern Klassen and is the son of Peter and Katie Klassen of Abbotsford, B.C. He is a member of Olivet Mennonite Church, Abbotsford.

Cleo Koop M.Div. Pastor of Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover, Md. Most meaningful for Cleo has been "the interaction with students, faculty and staff in a supportive environment which has fostered spiritual growth and development of gifts in pastoral ministry." Cleo is married to Faye Koop and they have four sons. His parents are Chris and Mildred Koop, Henderson, Neb.

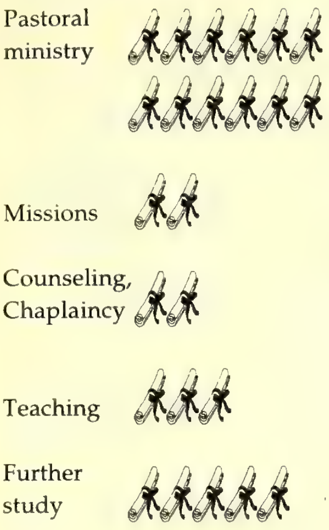
Marvin Koop M.Div. Pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man. "I became more aware of God's presence in my life, and in others. I learned to worship in more meaningful ways with others and by myself." Marvin is married to Evelyn Koop and they have four children. His parents are John and Clara Koop, Kleefeld, Man. He is a member of Fort Garry Evangelical Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man.

Nickolai A. Kornilov MATS in Church History. Will teach in recently opened Evangelical Baptist Seminary in Moscow, Russia. "It was a good opportunity to get Christian theological education and to think and discuss important issues in Christian thought and life." Nickolai is married to Marina Kornilova and they have five children. His parents are Alexander Kornilov and Lydia Kornilova of Moscow. He is a member of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Saltykovka, Moscow.

David Kratz MATS in Theology and Ethics. Voluntary service at the International Guest House in Washington, D.C., followed by further study in theology and ethics. "I am most grateful for the community at AMBS: the atmosphere of faith and international diversity provide an indispensable context for the study of faith." David is the son of David and Annabelle Kratz, Columbia, Md., and is a member of Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church.

Andrew Kreider M.Div. Director of Admissions, AMBS. Andrew especially appreciated "the opportunity to study the Bible in depth; the rich variety of experiences and backgrounds which students bring to class discussions." Andrew is married to Katie Kreider and they have one child, Joseph Bruce. He is a member of Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart. His parents are Alan and Eleanor Kreider, Oxford, England.

Plans of 1994 AMBS graduates



Dong Su Lee MAPS. Travelling ministry in South Korea. "Reading books updated me to the current issues in Christian theology and gave me a frame to study peace on my own." Dong Su is married to Woo Hee Lee and they have three children. He is the son of Do Young Lee, Seoul, Korea, and is a member of Caldwell United Methodist Church, Mukwanago, Wis.

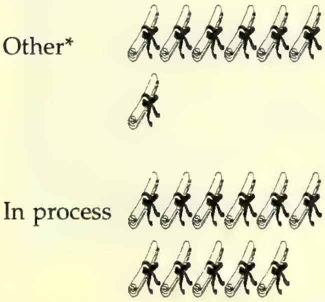
Bernice Letlhare MATS in Biblical Studies. *Not pictured.* Teaching at University of Botswana in the department of theology and religious studies. Bernice is the daughter of Edwin Letlhare, Gabarone, Botswana, and she has one child.

Naomi Lloyd MATS in Biblical Studies. Will complete a year-long internship in academic librarianship and then pursue further studies. "I feel that I have acquired a number of possible answers to the questions with which I came to AMBS—a more realistic hermeneutic and a more informed Christology." Naomi is the daughter of Jeannette and Leslie Lloyd, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Nickolai Kornilov, David Kratz, Andrew Kreider, Dong Su Lee, Naomi Lloyd

Plans *(continued)*



**Peace and justice, spiritual director, voluntary service, nursing, seminary administration and seminary librarian, and other employment.*

Commencement

Receive—and give—God's blessing, speaker tells graduates

Commencement is a time for blessings and beginnings, speaker Eleanor Kreider acknowledged.

The Mennonite Board of Missions worker in England reflected on the Luke 24 account of Jesus' final blessing for his disciples and his ascension.

Bless people often, the author of a book on worship told the future church workers, "so they can cross the bridge from worship to their daily lives of work, play and prayer. Help them become a people of blessing."

Kreider concluded, "This is a day of beginnings. Let us receive the blessing; let us receive the empowering of the Spirit; let us embark with joy and praise on the mission set before us. Immanuel; God goes with us."

A mother and son duo helped lead the commencement celebration, May 26, at College Mennonite Church in Goshen. Andrew Kreider, who received the Master of Divinity degree, led the singing and Eleanor Kreider, his mother, gave the commencement address. Photo by J. Tyler Klassen

Shirley Martin M.Div. Plans in process. "I treasure the space and guidance I received encouraging me to nurture my own spirituality. A place to reflect theologically in community was truly faith-building." Shirley is the daughter of Mary M. Martin, Waterloo, Ont., and is a member of Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Kathleen Mealman MATS in Christian Education. *Not pictured.* Will continue as Minister of Education at First United Methodist Church, Michigan City, Ind. "The feeling of community and the experience of studying with students from all over the world has made AMBS a meaningful experience." Kathleen is married to Donald L. Mealman and they have three children. She was consecrated as a Diaconal Minister in June.

Chet Miller-Eshleman MAPS. Plans in process; exploring graduate programs in conflict transformation. "AMBS has grounded and confirmed Anabaptist convictions for me. I am much better equipped to love God, neighbor, family and self." Chet is married to Holly Miller-Eshleman and they have one son. He is a member of Peace Mennonite Church, Elyria, Ohio, and attends Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart. His parents are David and Helen Eshleman, Lanham, Md.

Ezekiel Nartey MATS in Christian Education. Will teach at Good News Training Institute, Accra, Ghana. Ezekiel found most meaningful "the practical lessons that the professors teach by their lifestyle, deeper understanding of the gospel and its role in Christian ministry, and good friendship." Ezekiel is married to Florence Ferguson-Nartey, and they have four children. His parents are Gloria Aryee of Accra, Ghana, and the late Alfred Nartey. He is a member of the Church of Melchizedek, Accra.

James Nickel MATS in Christian Education. Plans in process. James is married to Lois Nickel and they have three children. His parents are Jake and Hilda Nickel, Saskatoon, Sask. He is a member of North Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church.

Christy Risser M.Div. Plans in process. Christy is a member of Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, and is the daughter of Arthur and Mary Ann Risser, Watertown, Wis.

Eileen Saner MATS in Church History. Will continue as librarian at AMBS. "Study and learning at AMBS has enhanced my ability to provide service in the library. I have appreciated the opportunity to become more fully involved with students and faculty." Eileen is married to Floyd Saner and they have three children. Her parents are Ruth Kelly, Bethlehem, Pa., and the late Dale Kelly. She is a member of Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Debra Schmidt M.Div. Plans in process. "My time at AMBS has been one of transformation and growth experienced through many meaningful relationships, new opportunities, and learning situations, and God's guiding presence." Debbie is married to Don Schmidt and they have three children and a daughter-in-law. She is a member of Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. Her parents are Walter and Thelma Unruh, Lahoma, Okla.

Steve Echols

Left to right: Shirley Martin, Chet Miller-Eshleman, Ezekiel Nartey, James Nickel, Christy Risser

Masha Sternik is one of two 1995 graduates from Russia. The community experience is one of the things she found most meaningful at AMBS. Photo by Mary E. Klassen

"As you commence the next phase of your journey:

- *Let your ministry be marked by* ***almighty meekness;***
- *Let your leadership model* ***bold humility;***
- *Let your journey be characterized by* ***patient persistence."***

Excerpt from the charge to the class of 1995 by Wilbert Shenk, associate professor of missions and director of Mission Training Center

Luke Schrock-Hurst MATS in Theology and Ethics. Continue work while Carmen completes studies; exploring pastoral and overseas ministry for the future. "Discussing theology while painting with fellow students; sharing joys and sorrows with our small group; accepting that God's grace is sufficient, made perfect in weakness," are among the things Luke has found meaningful at AMBS. Luke is married to Carmen Schrock-Hurst and they have two children. He is a member of Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., and an associate member of Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart. His parents are Dr. Luke Hurst of Harrisonburg, and the late Pearl Mast Hurst.

Linda Lehman Stephens MATS in Christian Spirituality. Will be consecrated as a diaconal minister in the United Methodist Church; will attend Graduate Theological Foundation, Donaldson, Ind. Linda especially appreciated "the many friendships with students and professors, my growth in my Christian faith, and experiencing healing of inner wounds." Linda is married to Daniel Stephens and has four children. She is a member of Nappanee (Ind.) United Methodist Church. Her parents are Charles Lehman, Syracuse, Ind., and the late Dorothy Lehman.

André Gingerich Stoner MATS in Theology and Ethics. Part-time member of pastoral team of Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind. "Interaction with professors, fellow students, and a spiritual director have all provided an invitation and a challenge to grow in faith as well as knowledge." André is marred to Cathy Gingerich Stoner and they have one son. His parents are Ray C. and Wilma Gingerich, Harrisonburg, Va.

Steve Echols

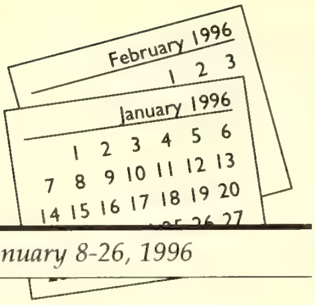
Left to right: Eileen Saner, Debbie Schmidt, Luke Schrock-Hurst, Steven Slagel, Linda Stephens, André Gingerich Stoner

John Sherk MATS in Biblical Studies. *Not pictured.* Will continue as pastor of Union Protestant Church, Cassopolis, Mich., and explore further graduate studies. John is married to Lori Kay Sherk.

Steven Slagel MATS in Biblical Studies. Will continue pastoral role at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen. "Being able to integrate my studies into pastoring has helped me to understand the value of both experience and education for ministry." Steve is marred to Barbara Slagel and they have three children. His parents are Eugene and Barbara Slagel, Midland, Mich.

1995 graduate Cleo Koop and Faye, his wife, talk with Lillian and Jake Elias, professor of New Testament. Cleo and his family have moved from Newton, Kan., to Westover, Md., where he will serve the Holly Grove Mennonite Church. Photo by Mary E. Klassen

Begin the new year at AMBS



Interterm 1996 — *January 8-26, 1996*

Gospel of Matthew
Mary Schertz
Anabaptist History and Theology
Myron Augsburger
Congregational Spirituality
Marlene Kropf, Marcus Smucker
Spirituality in Urban Mission
Mary Thiessen
Christianity and the Arts
Mary K. Oyer
Family Systems and Pastoral Care
Terri Brenneman
Community, Mutual Aid, Stewardship
Willard Swartley, assisted by Don Kraybill

All are three-hour courses. However, Spirituality in Urban Mission may be taken as a two-hour course for January 8-19; Community, Mutual Aid, Stewardship also may be taken for two credit hours.

For more information contact: *Andrew Kreider, Admissions*

Pastors' Week — *January 29-February 1, 1996*

Living From Abundance:
Pastoring From a Stewardship Perspective
Three and a half days of worship, Bible study, workshops and fellowship.

For more information contact: *Janeen Bertsche Johnson*
Continuing Education

Leadership Clinics — *February 2, 1996*

Enhancing Bible Study with Computer
Perry Yoder
Church Architecture
G. Edwin Bontrager, Marlene Kropf, Everett Thomas
Preaching
June Alliman Yoder
Spirituality Retreat for Pastors
Marcus Smucker

For more information, contact: *Janeen Bertsche Johnson*
Continuing Education

Weekend constultation — *January 26-28, 1996*

A consultation on mutual aid will feature sixteen researchers sharing findings from biblical, theological, ethical, historical, sociological, and medical perspectives. Sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid and the AMBS Institute of Mennonite Studies.

For more information contact: *Janeen Bertsche Johnson*
Continuing Education

AMBS Panorama

Fall open house

Seminary Sampler, the campus open house for people exploring seminary studies, is scheduled for September 24 and 25. Come observe classes, meet faculty and students, and participate in chapel. For information or to register, contact Andrew Krieder, director of Admissions.

Summer School enrollment

Summer School keeps growing! Enrollment for the summer of 1995 is up again with 113 people enrolled for a total of 140 course registrations. This is a 50 percent increase over the summer of 1991 when AMBS first offered summer courses. Seventy of the people enrolled this summer are "campus guests," meaning they have come only for summer courses, not spring or fall courses.

This summer, AMBS is offering nine courses, five by AMBS professors and four by guest instructors.

Preliminary financial report

Preaudited figures indicate that AMBS has balanced its budget for the fiscal year ending June 30. This result was possible because of good response to appeals and especially to a generous gift of $100,000 to match contributions in May and June.

In addition, preliminary figures show expenses under budget by almost three percent.

The Partners for Ministry campaign also played a part. Although some contributions to the campaign are for longer-term investment, other contributions helped with expenses in the current year.

Recognition

Two AMBS deans were honored at the annual event recognizing AMBS faculty and staff. Ross T. Bender was honored for 25 years of service to AMBS; fifteen of these as dean. Also honored was Gayle Gerber Koontz, dean from 1990 to early 1995, and acting president since the death of AMBS president Marlin E. Miller in November 1994. Daniel Schipani and Perry Yoder, professors, were each honored for ten years of service and Gary Nafziger-Meiser, assistant maintenance supervisor, for five years.

A gift on four wheels

Henry and Cornelia Kliewer from Henderson, Neb., delivered a gift to the seminary on June 19. They had spent the months of January and February in voluntary service at AMBS and returned in June with a 1989 pick-up truck, a gift from their congregation, Bethesda Mennonite.

Accepting the keys with gratitude were Virgil Claassen, business manager, and Don Steider, supervisor of maintenance.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Consulting editor: Richard A. Kauffman

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Gospel Herald, Mennonite Reporter, The Mennonite.

July 1995
Printed in U.S.A.

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

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Elkhart, IN 46517-1999
Telephone 219 295-3726

News

PSMC still learning how to do conference

Glendale, Ariz.—After more than one apology by the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference board for not being more organized and communicating better, coordinator Jeff Wright said, "We're on a learning curve here."

Delegates to the first assembly of PSMC met June 22-24 under the theme "Becoming a People of the Spirit."

In business sessions PSMC welcomed two congregations to its membership: Servant Community Church in Arroyo Grande, Calif., became a full member, and Hmong Christian Church of God in Fresno, Calif., joined as an associate member.

PSMC's executive board, attempting to keep delegates abreast of its work, presented a policy manual. Several people shared a concern about an item that stated, "Minutes of both board and executive committee will no longer be sent to congregations but will be for our eyes only."

Whether or not people would actually read minutes, such a statement makes the conference leadership seem aloof, said Ken Ashman of Servant Community Church.

Someone else expressed concern about an item that placed limitations on how resolutions are brought to the annual assembly.

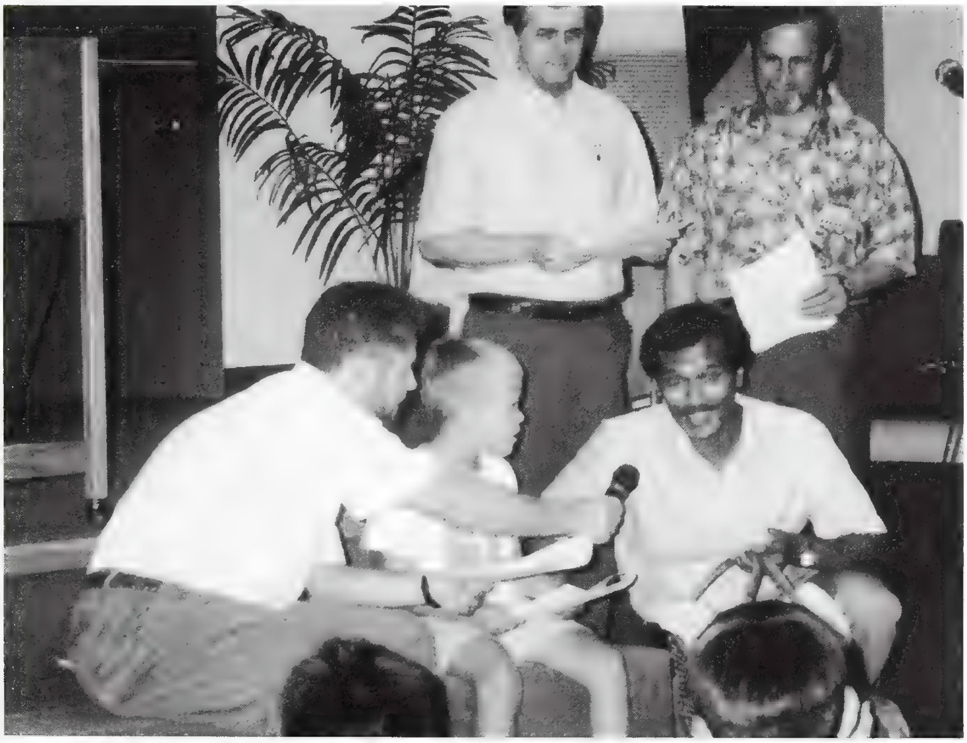
Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, a member of the executive committee, explained that the policy manual is more a description of how the board makes decisions. The board presented the manual to get feedback, but it does not need delegate approval, he said.

Nevertheless, Lillian Miller, Mountain View Church, Upland, Calif., warned that "we have to be careful not to move away from the church model to a business model."

The board met between delegate sessions and agreed to formulate a written policy about bringing resolutions. This will be mailed to congregations before next year's assembly.

The board also agreed to write summaries of board actions throughout the year and send these to pastors.

Moderator Duane Oswald said that the board failed to communicate properly this year and apologized for not getting delegate packets out earlier. He emphasized that this is a new entity and is establishing new ways of



Gordon Houser

People of the Spirit: *Pacific Southwest Conference participants dramatize the feeding of the 5,000.*

Inside the news

Anabaptist women focus of conference / p. 15

Viewpoint: handguns in America / p. 17

Pacific Northwest Conference still working out structure / p. 18

Physician makes midlife switch to seminary / p. 19

Mennonite missionaries in Hong Kong are unsure what 1997 will bring. Mennonite workers in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan met April 28-30 in Hong Kong and discussed what will happen when Hong Kong is returned to Chinese ownership. Many professionals are leaving Hong Kong; within Grace Mennonite Church in Hong Kong, 18 of the approximately 80 members plan to leave soon. But the Mennonite churches in Hong Kong have a strong missionary vision for post-1997, says David Shenk of Eastern Mennonite Missions. He says, "The churches of Hong Kong are emerging as a most strategic link between the rapidly growing churches of China that have tasted suffering and the churches of the Western world that are finding their way within the liberalism of Western democracies."

• • •

Christians in military service may be received into Tidewater (Va.) Mennonite congregations, with certain conditions. The Virginia Mennonite Conference's Faith and Life Commission (FLC) responded April 1 to the "Tidewater Document," drafted in 1990 by a study committee of member churches in the heavily militarized Hampton Roads section of Virginia. The FLC action says, "We expect that military persons will sense a growing incompatibility between the military enterprise and the gospel of peace. As we encourage them to leave the military, we want to be supportive of their search for alternative employment and/or vocational recycling." The FLC action says their response "is not the final word, but represents the best discernment available at this time." (*Gospel Herald*)

The divorce rate among clergy in the United States ranges from 4 percent of male pastors in the Southern Baptist denomination to 20 to 25 percent of clergy in mainline Protestant denominations and 47 percent of Unitarian female clergy. Female clergy tend to divorce before ordination, male clergy after ordination. The information comes from a 1994 Hartford Seminary survey of 4,544 clergy in 17 denominations. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

Mennonite church secretaries were paid the most ($10.50 per hour full time, $9.20 part time) and Disciples of Christ church secretaries were paid the least ($7.25 full time, $6 part time), according to a survey of U.S. churches. Churches with over 1,000 members paid an average of $9.74 per hour, while churches with less than 300 members paid an average of $8.45. Of full-time church secretaries, 72 percent are members of the churches where they work, 98 percent receive paid vacations, 47 percent receive medical insurance, 91 percent work with computers, and 60 percent do desktop publishing. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

Anita Yoder Kehr, until recently of San Antonio, Texas, is the first recipient of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's Church Leadership Award. Kehr will begin studies at AMBS in August, pursuing a Master of Divinity degree. The AMBS Church Leadership Award is a new scholarship offered to one incoming student in the Master of Divinity program. As the fund for the award grows, AMBS plans to offer a total of eight awards, several for the Master of Arts programs as well as the M.Div. program. The award provides a full-tuition scholarship to the recipient for three years in the M.Div. program and two years in the Master of Arts programs.

Facts about Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference

- made up of 39 member congregations
- only nine full-time pastors
- except for four congregations, the average membership of congregations is 50
- includes eight language groups
- most churches are urban
- most of the pastors are Baby Boomers
- made up of mostly small urban churches with bare-bones budgets

doing business. They have learned, he said, that it is better to overcommunicate than undercommunicate.

Budget: The PSMC board proposed a 1996 budget of $131,748, a 2.4 percent decrease from 1995, with the major part of it—$65,434—designated for staff, most for three one-third-time conference minister positions. However, giving from churches (through 11 months of the fiscal year) was more than $21,000 short of budget.

How will we meet the new budget with so little income? asked James Wenger of Fresno, Calif. George Harper of Fresno added that the board needs to work at resource development, since fewer than half the member churches contributed to the budget.

Yet several ministers testified to the importance of having conference ministers in their respective areas, and in the end the budget passed.

In discussing topics that will be addressed at Wichita '95, delegates affirmed a move toward integration of the two denominations. While some said they wanted to be sure no congre-

Stanley Green calls churches to renewal

Glendale, Ariz.—Stanley Green, president of Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church, gave three presentations at Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference. In his first talk, "Becoming a People of the Spirit in Prayer," Green said that God answers our prayers. But, he said, "Prayer is not a technique for controlling God." He quoted Simone Weil, who called prayer a work of "decreation." Green said we must abandon ourselves to a benevolent God.

Green

In his second talk, "Becoming a People of the Spirit in Mission," Green said that Jesus perceived himself as the Sent One.

"Jesus did not come to evangelize the nations but to procure our redemption," he said. It is our task to bring the good news to the world.

He has seen among some Mennonites, he said, "an insidious universalism" in which tolerance becomes relativism and Christ is not seen as the only way to salvation. He also sees people joining a church for cultural rather than faith reasons.

Green accused our institutions of often focusing so much on maintenance that they neglect the task that Christ has called us to. "Anesthetized by prosperity and affluence, many Mennonites have no passion for mission," he said.

In his third talk, "Becoming a People of the Spirit in Community," Green quoted the lament, "Jesus preached the kingdom, but what came was the church." The church today has four important tasks, he said:

1. We should expect God's transforming presence. In some congregations, he said, he has sensed an expectation that God might come in power, but in others he has seen no such expectation.

2. We need to be a community that bears one another's burdens. Everywhere people are turning inward, he said, while we are witnessing an erosion of caring and compassion.

3. We should be a community that is continually open to renewal. Mennonites often operate under perfectionism instead of realizing that we are all sinners in need of grace.

4. Finally, we need to be welcoming communities. He said he knows of no more wonderful word than "welcome." *Gordon Houser*

gations left the church because of integration, Ron Friesen said that "mission boards and strategies especially should be combined." Inez Unger, Trinity Church, Glendale, said, "I didn't grow up MC [Mennonite Church] or GC [General Conference], so I don't know what all the flap is about. We need to look at the larger picture and remember that God is for us."

Next year's meeting will be June 20-22 in San Diego. *Gordon Houser*

Meeting focuses on Anabaptist women

Millersville, Pa. (Meetinghouse)—Speak up. Talk back. Say your piece. Let the chorus of voices begin.

These words, proclaimed during the first plenary session, set the tone for "The Quiet in the Land? Women of Anabaptist Traditions in Historical Perspective" conference here at Millersville University June 8-11.

Three days later, the 256 participants from Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and the United States were both exhilarated and exhausted after absorbing a multitude of academic papers and artistic performances.

Many voiced their thanks to those who had the courage to plan this first-ever academic conference solely focused on the history of Anabaptist women.

Katy Thiessen, an accountant from Winnipeg, described the event as "tremendously affirming." Sometimes at odds with her mother, who emigrated from Russia to Canada, she said, "How could I have known my mother's experience? Like many poor Mennonite women she was a martyr for the sake of her husband and children. History has long been a therapist. You have told my story."

Others were moved by the accounts of early Anabaptist women, including the story of how a Zurich official, who was sent to collect fines, received a tongue-lashing from a group of Anabaptist women in Zolliken, Switzerland, in 1525.

"Women have not been so quiet in our tradition," said Rachel Waltner Goossen, history professor at Goshen (Ind.) College. She noted that 99 papers were presented at the conference by women compared with 16 by men, drawing laughter and applause when she observed, "That kind of gender imbalance surely is a first in our Mennonite/Anabaptist tradition."

"The Quiet in the Land?" was not only unprecedented in terms of the focus on women but also in its format. A number of historians expressed their surprise and affirmation for the way the presenters wove their own stories

continued next page

Cheryl Nafziger-Leis

'Quietly landed?' *Performing Sharon Fransen's "In the Meadow Yellow with Dandelions and Croaking with Crickets" are (from left) Melanie Cameron, Lorna Schwartzentruber, Chris Derstine, Brenda Jewitt and Dorothy Bowman.*

When U.S. citizens surveyed were asked what annual income they would need to fulfill their dreams, the median of the sums they listed came to $102,200. Seventy-five percent more this year said they would need at least $1 million than said so last year. (*Harper's*)

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Ontario Mennonite Music Camp (for ages 12 to 15) runs Aug. 13-25 at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont. For information, call Eleanor Dueck at the college, (519) 885-0220, ext. 226.

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Chinese Christians in Moscow taught some Chinese gangsters about peace this spring. Twenty gangsters from the Chinese mafia in Beijing attacked members of Moscow Chinese Christian Assembly as they left worship one Sunday. The gangsters, demanding money, seriously wounded seven fellowship members. The police arrested the thugs, and the church demanded $13,000 for damages. In following days the church members re-evaluated their position. "God didn't like our plan," says church leader Pan Yung Xin. "We repented of our unforgiving attitudes and stopped demanding our rights. We cried to God and confessed our sins." Pan says God spoke to the church through Romans 12:21, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." The church began praying for the gangsters, declined to press charges, and asked for only $2,000 to cover hospital expenses of church members. The released gangsters returned later to thank the church. "They don't yet attend church," Pan says, "but we believe they have a new understanding of the love of God." (Eastern Mennonite Missions)

Supermodels have a conscience, too. *Wall Street Journal* reports on the DISHES Project, or, Determined Involved Supermodels Helping to End Suffering. DISHES organizes fund-raisers to benefit children with AIDS. The group offers a 1995 calendar called "DISHES for Pediatric AIDS." (*Salt of the Earth*)

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Dr. Brian C. Wintle has resigned from his position as principal and professor at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India, following a six-month leave of absence. He had served at UBS since 1986. In recent years, a conflict over the seminary leadership emerged among faculty and students. Dr. I. Ben Wati is serving as the interim president until July 31. The Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church of India is represented on the UBS board.

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Representatives from the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Northern District Conference met with 10 NDC churches May 21-28. The purpose of the visit was "to build a bridge," said GC general secretary Vern Preheim. Four NDC churches withdrew their membership from the General Conference and/or NDC in the last two years. Preheim noted that church members expressed a wide variety of attitudes toward NDC and the General Conference. While several were quite critical, others affirmed conference work. Some of the issues that were mentioned during the visit included the ordination of women, homosexuality, military service and view of the Scriptures.

into the academic material.

For example, in her paper titled "Women and Dress: In and Out of the World," Julie Musselman, Harleysville, Pa., spoke candidly of the restriction she felt as a child due to the dress code of the Amish. Now a fashion designer, Musselman wore her grandmother's cape dress during her presentation.

"This is the first time we are being personal. This very act seems 'womanist'," said Barbara Bolz, a professor at Indiana University in Bloomington.

From the outset, the organizers strived to make the conference inclusive of as many voices as possible. As a result, the participants came from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests: Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren, Brethren in Christ, Amish, Hutterites, German Baptists and Jews were among those present. Scholars were joined by pastors, artists and dancers. Grandmothers sat next to babies.

> **"I think we all have two places inside us—both the margin and the center."**
>
> ***Diane Zimmerman Umble***

Goossen likened the event to a "big tent meeting. We have not been concerned with boundaries. Many perspectives have been expressed underneath this canopy. I am simply reveling in the richness."

Part of the richness was due to the performances of artists throughout the conference. Poets Jean Janzen, Fresno, Calif.; Di Brandt, Winnipeg; Sarah Klassen, Winnipeg, and Julia Kasdorf, Brooklyn, N.Y., read from selected works on the evening of June 9. Two multifaceted pieces, "Prayers for Girls: A Meditation on Red and Blue" and "Quietly Landed?," premiered on June 10.

Several artists spoke about the difficulty of finding their voice within the confines of the Mennonite community. Di Brandt said she had to break her ties with the Mennonite church, telling of the "terror, rage and exuberance" it took for her "to smash through the public silence."

Others, such as painter Sylvia Gross Bubalo, Goshen, never left the Mennonite church. She also struggled to gain acceptance for her work, which she saw as part of God's ministry. The church leaders, she said, had and continue to have so much power it has a visceral effect on her.

Many articulated the dilemma of integrating their Mennonite and non-Mennonite selves. Diane Zimmerman Umble, Lancaster, Pa., conference director and acting dean of humanities and social sciences at Millersville University, spoke of the difficulties of "speaking from my own place" as an academic and an Anabaptist woman. "I think we all have two places inside us—both the margin and the center," she said.

"I know many of you need a welcoming place to express your anger," said Jeni Hiett Umble, who became a Mennonite 15 years ago. "But sometimes during this conference I've wanted to say, 'Excuse me, has anybody had a good experience?' I found my voice in the Mennonite church." Umble is a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

In response to a question about whether the presence of men—a clear minority at the conference—was affirming or alienating, Sharon Kraybill, Lancaster, cautioned against "doing to men what they did to us. As we reconstruct history, let us do it together."

Carol Ann Weaver, composer and music professor at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., said, it "felt right" to have an abundance of women's voices: "I'm not saying this from a position of political correctness. There is a time for inclusiveness."

James Juhnke, history professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., applauded the focus on "women so long excluded, still excluded. ... We male historians had the same revisionist attitude. We said, 'Shame on them. We're going to do it right.' Now here I am. Blessings on all of us as we revise and go on." He urged historians to examine further the international story, noting that most Mennonites are not white or from North America.

In the final plenary session, Marlene Epp, a doctoral candidate in Canadian history from the University of Toronto, told participants to keep their "ears and eyes open" for another conference, joking that it might perhaps be titled "The Quiet Din in the Land" or "Too Much Noise in the Land."
Carla Reimer

Viewpoint: handguns

Back from overseas work with MCC, Carol Rose is shocked by the violence she has found in the United States.

Carol Rose

Lancaster, Pa.—I would not trade my city neighborhood here in Lancaster for any other in Lancaster County. It is alive and vibrant, a fascinating mix of cultures. People greet each other and respond to one another's needs. We have many good neighbors—and a few others.

The availability and presence of guns, however, affects me more here than it has in any of my other service assignments with Mennonite Central Committee.

During my first MCC assignment in Honduras, I served as an "international presence" in a militarized zone on the border. Because we lived alongside refugees fleeing El Salvador, the military was less likely to kill them.

Dave Schrock-Shenk

Pride and beauty: *The author gardens with a child in her Lancaster, Pa., neighborhood.*

While in Thailand with MCC I saw police disperse peaceful demonstrators so violently that the incident warranted parliamentary hearings.

Later I worked in an area notorious for war and human rights abuses on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines.

Still, I have personally witnessed more violence during my first year here in Lancaster than I have in any other MCC term.

While in Honduras I learned a skill I thought unique to war zones. I could identify weapons by sound. It became second nature to estimate type of gun, distance and direction upon hearing shots. I had gotten rusty, but life in Lancaster is reviving this skill. I hear gunshots frequently—mostly from handguns, once from an automatic weapon.

Interestingly, MCC work in Lancaster falls into an odd catch-22. On the one hand, some people express surprise that MCC even works here, as if there is no need for a presence in such a Mennonite area. On the other hand, some say it's too dangerous a place to live or even to visit. Yet seldom does anyone question MCC's work in troubled overseas settings.

Three times during the past year I've been within 100 yards of gunfire. In each case handguns were used. Two of these were interchanges between groups of men who might be called "gangs." I don't understand all the internal and societal dynamics that have them fighting one another, but drug trade and racism are certainly factors.

I watched one volley from my

Facts about guns

- Guns kill more U.S. citizens every year than were killed in battle during the last five years of the Vietnam War.
- Every day 15 children in the United States die from gunshots.
- Firearm injuries are now the leading cause of death for teenage boys in the United States.
- Owning a gun requires no license or safety course.
- The law imposes greater liability on an adult whose dog bites a child than on one whose gun falls into a child's hands, causing injury or fatality.

St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church is celebrating its 50th anniversary Oct. 20-22. Friends and former members are invited. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Mecca, Saudi Arabia, holy city to Muslims, will soon have its own McDonalds. Only "halal" meat (the Muslim equivalent to kosher) will be served. Only Muslims are allowed in the holiest city in Islam, and planes are not permitted to fly over the city, in case some non-Muslims might be on board. (*Liberty*)

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With, an Anabaptist youth magazine published by Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan., tied for 14th place in a listing of top Christian magazine publishers for writers. *With* also received a third place listing for the teen publication category. The listing, printed in the *Christian Writers' Market Guide*, is based on overall design and quality as well as openness and regard for Christian writers.

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Assemblies of God members give the most money to their churches, while Catholics give the least, according to a two-year study of 10,000 people in 625 churches. *The Church Around the World* reports that Assemblies of God individuals contributed $628 per year; Presbyterians, $611; Baptists, $550; Lutherans, $415; and Catholics, $160. The report also said churchgoers give more if they have positive feelings about the way the money is spent and have information and influence regarding spending decisions. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

The Mormon church has agreed to purge from its records the names of 380,000 Holocaust victims baptized by proxy. The baptisms—performed by Mormons acting without church authorization—angered Holocaust survivors. Posthumous baptism can achieve salvation, according to Mormon teaching. Proxy baptisms are supposed to be limited to family members. Some 200 million names are on the list of baptized dead. (*Gospel Herald*)

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A religious exemption from an Oregon bike helmet requirement has passed the state's legislature and is expected to become law. The law now requires bicycle riders under age 16 to wear a helmet when riding in places accessible to the public. Sen. Mae Yih sponsored the exemption at the request of members of the Western Conservative Mennonite Fellowship. "The church's ritual requires a girl to wear a special head covering when she accepts a church's teachings," she said in the Albany, Ore., *Democrat-Herald*. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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Execution in Saudi Arabia is on the rise. *World Press Review* reports that 90 people were put to death in public squares in the first four months of this year, compared with 53 for all of 1994. Nearly 70 percent of those executed in the past three years were foreigners. More than half the foreigners were Pakistanis, followed by Nigerians, Filipinos and Afghans. Most were beheaded for drug-trafficking. Other crimes that carry the death penalty are possessing and drinking alcohol, slander of God, practicing black magic, rape and keeping a brothel. In the past three years five women have been beheaded.

Guns and the U.S. Congress

Washington (MCC)—Last year the U.S. Congress enacted some restrictions on gun ownership, banning assault weapons, requiring a waiting period and background check for gun purchases and criminalizing possession of handguns by juveniles.

This year Congress is poised to rescind those laws. Senate majority leader Robert Dole of Kansas promised the National Rifle Association that the Senate would repeal the assault weapons ban. A vote on the repeal was to take place in May but has been postponed in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing. A number of congressional members who credit the NRA for their election say repeal of the assault weapons ban is their top priority.

House leadership hopes to go even further by eliminating the ability of state or local governments to restrict guns.

The Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office has encouraged members of Congress to retain the ban on assault weapons. MCC U.S. joined religious leaders, hunters' organizations and families of gun victims at press conferences supporting the ban. *Karl S. Shelly*

bedroom window. During another I was in the front yard. The most recent shooting occurred a few doors down. A young, pregnant woman was hit in the abdomen by a bullet meant for another household member. I saw the assailant flee and the woman stumble out and collapse on the front steps.

Handguns and automatic weapons have no place in the 'peace garden' God is creating among us.

But the community is responding to the violence. A year before I arrived, a young man was killed in a gunfight directly across the street from our house. His death impelled the neighborhood to work together even harder to build community and curb crime. I've been glad to join that effort.

Neighbors are working together to lobby the city for better street lighting and enforcement of housing standards and to sponsor youth activities, clean-up campaigns and projects to facilitate home ownership and foster neighborhood pride.

Last spring we planted a "peace garden" at the site of the young man's death. Many people participated. The blossoming garden bears witness to our hope in and work for peace. Some predicted the plantings would be quickly vandalized; they bloomed long and beautifully.

This year we sponsored a work day in the garden. With only a little coaxing, teenagers took a break from "hanging out" to cart heavy rocks for the pathway. All ages—children to adults—planted flowers and shoveled mulch. As spring turns to summer the roses are a riot of blooms.

The neighborhood consensus is that the violence is true craziness; it must stop. It's clear to me that handguns and automatic weapons are not for hunting animals. They are for killing human beings; they have no part in the "peace garden" God is creating among us.

Carol Rose, in her 10th year as an MCC service worker, currently directs the daycare center at Mom's House in Lancaster, Pa.

Pacific Northwest still works at structure issues

Nampa, Idaho (GCMC)—The Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference (PNMC) met here June 15-18 for its first annual meeting since its formation one year ago.

Last summer's meeting in Reedley, Calif., was touted as a historic event when three area conferences—the Pacific Coast and Southwest conferences of the Mennonite Church (MC) and Pacific District of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) disbanded and formed two new dually affiliated conferences—Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest.

The heart of this year's gathering

was captured in the theme, "Overflowing with Love." Guest speaker Jonathan Larson wove words of encouragement and challenge together with stories from India and Africa. He said that God's love is like a river that runs through us and among us.

Budget: Delegates discussed and voted on two separate budgets. A conference budget of $85,300 was approved, up $4,300 from the 1994-95 fiscal year. The evangelism and mission committee's separate budget of $120,186 was also approved.

Lynn Miller, Albany, Ore., asked how realistic it is to expect that both budgets will be met in the coming year.

Lee Lever of Ritzville, Wash., called for one integrated budget so that congregations can see the total financial picture of the conference and its implications for congregational giving.

Mission committee place unclear: Marion Schrock, Salem, Ore., acknowledged that there are philosophical differences regarding the evangelism and mission committee and its relationship to the conference. He urged, "Let's not sweep these questions under the rug but seek to address them, perhaps in a separate mid-year, conference-wide meeting."

Assistant moderator Cleon Claassen, Moses, Wash., said the board was in the process of outlining a procedure by which further discussion can occur.

In other business, the Mennonite Conference of Mexico and the PNMC evangelism and mission committee signed a covenant outlining their administrative and financial relationship—in three years, the mission efforts in Mexico will be fully supported by the local church.

As reports came from church-wide agencies, delegates repeatedly called for streamlined methods of communication and a cooperative approach to projects and products.

Several people expressed their enthusiasm about the union of MCs and GCs. "I applaud and celebrate these days and wish the broader church could be here to see what you've done," said Miriam Book, associate general secretary of the MC General Board. "If those who are hesitant [about integration] could have been here for worship and work, there would be no question about integration."

Palmer Becker, Aurora, Ore., said, "This is an exciting time in our life." He asked if someone could be specifically designated to take that witness to Wichita '95, the joint MC/GC convention.

Moderator John Willems, Albany, responded with the challenge that all PNMC delegates at Wichita '95 carry words of hope. *Teresa Moser McDermid*

Physician makes midlife move to seminary

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—For George Stoltzfus, pursuing a seminary degree after several years as a hospital administrator and physician is the most natural thing to do.

"After I received my medical degree we were visiting my wife's mother, who asked me, 'If you weren't a doctor, what would you be?' I asked her what she thought I would be. 'That's easy—you'd be a preacher,'" Stoltzfus says.

Stoltzfus

Furthermore, Stoltzfus says, when he told the hospital chief executive that he was resigning, the CEO reminded him of a conversation they had in 1988. "He asked me what I would be doing in five to 10 years and I said that I would be in full-time mission work or in seminary," Stoltzfus says.

Stoltzfus and his wife, Mae, moved to Elkhart from Maryland in August 1994 for him to pursue a Master of Arts degree in theology. Besides the prophetic proclamations from Mae's mother, Stoltzfus' work as moderator for the Allegheny Conference and his involvement with the Mennonite Church General Board furthered his interest in church work.

"I found an excitement and thrill in being close to the church," Stoltzfus says. "After a General Board meeting I would think, 'That's where I should be!'"

It is clear to Stoltzfus, however, that he is not preparing for the pastorate. He is interested in utilizing his experience as a physician, an administrator, and now seminary training for either some kind of church work or in some

The United States spends 15 times more on weapons than its six potential adversaries (as identified by the Pentagon) combined. Its military budget exceeds the combined budgets of the next 10 highest-spending countries. (*Signs of the Times*)

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One of Russia's last dirty secrets is the prevalence of domestic violence, reports *World Press Review*. The magazine cites Moscow weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta*'s report that 14,500 women were killed by their husbands in 1993, and 54,500 were seriously injured. Those numbers only include officially reported incidents. A private Crisis Center for Women was established in Moscow in mid-1993.

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The United States essentially saved South Africa's atomic-power program in 1981 by secretly brokering a $250-million deal to provide the country with enriched uranium. In the conservative *Sunday Times* of Johannesburg, Diana Streak reports on the revelations, recently published in a book on the country's nuclear industry. The uranium shipments, originating in France, came at a time "when it looked likely that South Africa's whole nuclear project would collapse," Streak writes. South Africa was deadlocked with the United States over uranium shipments on which Pretoria had made a $5 million down payment. France agreed to make the deal, but only with a green light from Washington. Washington gave the OK after Pretoria promised to allow American inspection teams at its fuel-enrichment facility and to initiate serious negotiations to end the occupation of Namibia. (*World Press Review*)

aspect of medicine.

"Medicine, particularly administrative medicine, is full of choices and struggles between what's right and what's expedient. I felt I needed more tools to deal with those kinds of issues," he says.

When people are considering a career change in midlife, Stoltzfus advises them to "just do it."

"I think it's important to understand one's motivations; even if it's a case of simply wanting to get out, you need to be willing to state that," Stoltzfus says.

"I heard a program on public radio that said you should make a career change every seven years," he says. "I think there is so much value in being willing to disrupt your comfort zones and go out and do some other things." *June Mears*

***Cosmopolitan* has reported on mutual funds sponsored by religious faith groups as a way to blend faith and finances. The proliferation of such funds includes for Mennonites Mennonite Mutual Aid's Praxis Funds, a Jewish fund sponsored by B'nai Brith, Aquinas Funds for Catholics, Amana Mutual Funds for Muslims (which avoid banks, bonds and other investments related to interest earning), the Timothy Plan for fundamentalists and an Evangelical Christian fund. In contrast, "vice" funds such as Morgan Fun Shares purposely seek out firms involved in those hedonistic pursuits eschewed by the Religious Right.**

The **National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors** (NISBCO) is now accepting applications for the position of **executive director**. Closing date for applications is **Oct. 1, 1995**. The position begins Jan. 1, 1996 (negotiable). Please contact NISBCO for a job description and additional information.

Write or call **NISBCO, 1612 K Street NW, Suite 1400, Washington, DC 20006-2802, (202) 293-3220, fax (202) 293-3218, e-mail NISBCO@igc.apc.org.**

Position available: **administrator** of 119-bed skilled-care health center. Applicants should possess NHA, Illinois Administrator's License. BA required (MS preferred), experience in team building, goal setting, Medicare, Medicaid and resident-centered quality care. This Mennonite-related CCRC has served central Illinois since 1922, and is considered a model for retirement communities of the future.

Send letters of inquiry and resumes to **Nancy Umphress, Human Resources Director, Maple Lawn Homes, 700 N. Main St., Eureka, IL 61530.** Equal opportunity employer

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Goshen College announces a part-time position for softball coach for the 1995-96 school year. The person is responsible to coach and develop the women's softball program—recruit quality athletes within Goshen College guidelines, plan, organize and implement schedule and budget. Master's degree preferred together with coaching experience suitable to the collegiate level. The load is concentrated between February and May, with about 15 percent contract load assigned. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send letter of application, resume and professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**. Screening of applicants begins immediately, and the position remains open until filled.

Mennonite Health Services invites applications for the position of **executive director**. Qualifications include Christian commitment and participation in an Anabaptist congregation; administrative, organizational and marketing skills; budget experience; comfort with many publics; enthusiasm and energy. Responsibilities include providing visionary leadership and expanding services for MHS, an organization that relates to health providers (including hospitals, retirement facilities, mental health and developmental disabilities providers). Some overnight travel required.

Send letter of interest and resume **by Aug. 8** to **Arlene M. Mark, 29222 Frailey Drive, Elkhart, IN 46514-1121**.

MENNONITE PROPERTY & CASUALTY GROUP, INC.

Invites resumes for the position of

Chief Executive Officer

Mennonite Property and Casualty Group, Inc. is composed of over 10 different Mennonite & Church of the Brethren Mutual Aid Organizations operating in the United States. MPCG was established to work cooperatively to provide casualty and other services that individually these organizations do not provide. MPCG has just been created and the successful candidate will need to have the appropriate leadership, creativity and relational skills to lead this entity through its formative years. MPCG is governed by a Board composed of one representative from each of the participating organizations, Mennonite Indemnity, Inc. and the Mennonite General Board.

Beginning date is negotiable - preferably by October 1, 1995.

Send Resume or letters of interest by July 30, 1995 to: Jay R. Goering, MPCG Chair
Ph: 316-345-2837 PO Box 639,
Fax: 316-345-2836 Moundridge KS 67107-0639

Reviews

BOOKS

PRICE PAID FOR PEACE

American Mennonites and the Great War 1914-1918 *by Gerlof D. Homan (Herald Press, 1994, 235 pages)*

Reviewed by J. Winfield Fretz, North Newton, Kan.

Anyone seriously interested in advancing the cause of peace should look back to obstacles that faced a denomination with a peace church heritage. Gerlof D. Homan tells in vivid detail how unprepared Mennonites were to defend their conscientious objections to war in the face of their hostile, superpatriotic neighbors.

Reading Homan's book, the reader will find literally hundreds of names of individuals, church leaders and congregations that encountered difficulties in expressing and maintaining their historic pacifist position. The author makes clear the discrepancy between public policy toward religious objectors to war and the actual carrying out of those policies in the places where objectors were sent. Not a few conscientious objectors were brutally mistreated and even tortured by soldiers in barracks.

Many readers will discover for the first time that not only drafted young men were put under severe tests. So too were ministers and church lay leaders who counseled young men of draft age. They were called unpatriotic for advising young men not to join military service. Many of these same church leaders were also severely criticized and threatened for not buying "liberty" bonds and were forced to make contributions to the American Red Cross.

Homan points out vividly how widely Mennonite congregations differed in their attitudes toward both war bonds and conscientious objection. Some ministers and congregations seemingly gave no instruction about the objection to participation in wars and violence.

Although the United States and Canada are not currently at war with anyone, young men and women of draft age would profit by informing themselves of the price paid by an earlier generation of draftees.

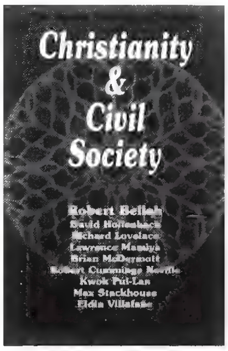
A COMMUNITY OF INDIVIDUALS?

Christianity and Civil Society: Theological Education for Public Life, *essays edited by Rodney L. Peterson (Orbis, 1995, 196 pages)*

Reviewed by Jacob T. Friesen, North Newton, Kan.

The essays of *Christianity and Civil Society* explore the social significance of Christianity with reference to theological education and the preparation of church leaders. In them, distinguished scholars examine issues shaping our training for ministry.

Boston Theological Institute convened a symposium to celebrate its 25th anniversary. In this book, essays by presenters at this conference are edited by Peterson. Robert Bellah, co-author of the widely read book *Habits of the Heart*, writes the first chapter and the afterword with clarity and insight.



This volume reminds us that our national social agenda, whatever it may be, cannot be pursued apart from the virtues that make the common life possible. Christian truth, as grounded in Jesus Christ, is not different from general truth. Understanding this statement is the work of theological education.

Bellah focuses on the central issue of "individuality and community." These supported each other for 500 years but were equated in the early years of the 20th century. "Individualism, heralded for its power of emancipation or expressive liberation, challenges our ability to live together in community."

Individualism has a darker consumerist attitude, implying, as Bellah writes, "the idea that each individual chooses his or her religious affiliation without any external influence. This attitude contradicts the existence of religious communities." Individual autonomy is not a fully developed virtue. "It is the critically important virtue of late adolescence, when an individual needs to be freed from parental and other authority in order to find a form of fidelity to oneself. ... Virtues of responsibility, care and wisdom do not subvert but enrich the virtue of autonomy."

The range of issues dealt with in these essays is impressive and thought-provoking. However, there is a conspicuous absence of a discussion of the nature of the church and its role in the call and nurture of gifts from within its membership. It must be added that while this is Anabaptist theology, it is not generally lived out in our churches.

CONFLICTIVE O.T. VOICES

The Origins of the Bible: Rethinking Canon History *by John W. Miller (Paulist Press, 1994, 250 pages)*

Reviewed by Gary F. Daught, Brandon, Man.

The Christian Bible is a collection of books bound together as one. It contains writings considered authoritative for guiding the faith and life of the Christian community. Such a collection of authoritative writings is called a canon (meaning "reed" or "measuring stick").

But how did this collection get to us? Who was responsible for putting it together? What were the religious and historical circumstances at work in the selection process?

These are some of the questions addressed in this new book by John W. Miller, professor emeritus at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.

Extensive notes and an annotated bibliography reveal that Miller has a firm grasp of the current literature surrounding the study of canon history. But not content simply to collate and summarize, the book makes an original contribution to this important area of study. And because Miller's style is clear and logical, interested lay readers need not feel excluded from the otherwise "scholarly" conversation.

Most of the attention in the book focuses on the development of the Hebrew Scriptures (essentially equivalent to the Old Testament). Miller contends that all the writings in the Hebrew Bible bear the imprint of differing and often conflicted theological outlooks of two priesthoods in Israel: the Zadokites and the Levites.

In the reforms of Ezra-Nehemiah of the fifth century BCE, the two priesthoods where brought back together. This action provided the context for the formalizing of the canon. Though edited to moderate the earlier conflict, it is remarkable that the writings of both groups were preserved, enabling the community to benefit from the insights of each, and providing "resources for Israel's unification and renewal."

Miller's proposal suggests Christians take steps to recover the canon of Scripture in its wholeness. The unfortunate polarization created by the designations "Old" and "New" Testament severs the church from its shared heritage with the people of Israel and robs it of a fuller understanding of its relationship with God.

This is an important work deserving of our attention.

LIBERATOR WOMEN

Slow Miracles: Urban Women Fighting for Liberation *by G.F. Thompson (LuraMedia, 1995, 94 pages)*

Reviewed by Wanda Derksen-Bergen, Abbotsford, B.C.

My gut response to this book (and yes, it evoked a gut response)—I loved it! I laughed out loud, cringed at what might happen in the story ahead and interrupted my husband more than once to read a part he *had* to hear right away.

Thompson presents a brief, well-thought-out biblical account of liberation in the Moses story. She is able to share the power of "birthing Moses" with the reader in a way that immediately intrigues and inspires, pushing one to read on. The reading is easy, the stories well written and the message powerful in a simple way as she shares vignettes from the lives of women that she has discovered are active liberators.

The short stories are interspersed with accounts of the author's own life experiences. She tells her story, using the metaphor of "Pharaoh's daughter," and does an excellent job of unifying the two on a thematic journey of hope and courage.

I laughed at Lydia's success in the cockroach incident. It was tough to hear the pain of the childhood accounts of Pharaoh's daughter. The story of Sissy maintaining her dignity and showing her children that their mother would not be pushed around in spite of financial sacrifice made me think again about priorities. And Nadine's insistence on building upon fragile dreams taught me that one must take risks together with those around us to keep hope alive.

Thompson has affirmed that power of hope and assured us that indeed, "this baby will live!" This book encouraged my spirit to soar and participate in the "slow miracles" that really do happen.

A STUDY OF STEWARDSHIP

Stepping Stones of the Steward: A Faith Journey through Jesus' Parables *by Ronald E. Vallet (2nd edition, Eerdmans, 1994, 192 pages)*

Reviewed by Mark Vincent, Sturgis, Mich.

As the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church begin a five-year joint project of developing a theology of money, we need to begin with studying what the Bible says. Ronald E. Vallet's book is a good place to start, particularly for Christians, who believe that Jesus Christ—his life, ministry and supremacy in God's kingdom—is the focal point of faith.

Although Vallet's subject matter is stewardship, this book is really a Bible study on Jesus' parables that contain stewardship teaching. Thus, the book is better suited for the commentary shelf than for any other.

The first two paragraphs on the back cover provide an accurate description of the book's contents:

"Taking the images of 'journey' and 'steward' as metaphors for the Christian's life, and using parables of Jesus found in Matthew and Luke, Ronald Vallet helps focus a truly biblical understanding of the term steward. ... Written to inform and encourage pastors and laypersons who seek to explore new dimensions in their Christian journey, Vallet's inspirational study teaches Christians how to gain a sense of purpose, how to properly use their resources, talents and money, and how to reach out with compassion for the welfare of

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others and for the planet."

I use books as tools, underlining significant truths and dog-earing pages I want to refer to later. Because of the book's biblical focus, I now have much fresh material on Jesus' parables for future sermon and teaching preparation, and many dog-eared pages.

The book is readable and organized for both personal reading and group study. Pastors, development professionals, Christians in business and Bible students everywhere will find this a significant resource to turn to repeatedly.

LOCAL CHURCH INVESTING

Lending a Hand: A Congregation's Guide to Community Investing *by Kathryn Tholon (Woodstock Institute, 1995, 28 pages)*

Reviewed by Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, Fresno, Calif.

If a congregation wanted to impact the community around it, what could it do? One way is for the congregation to provide capital for community development projects. Many innovative local efforts never get off the ground due to lack of capital. Poor areas are not the places banks look to make loans. What can a church do about such a large problem?

LENDING A HAND

Say an adult day-care center for Alzheimer's patients needed $10,000 to open in the older neighborhood around the church. Could your church give them the money? What if it was $20,000, or $30,000? No? But your church could probably make a low- or no-interest loan of that amount. As one pastor quoted in the book says, "Our $10,000 loan at 4 percent interest cost us $400 a year in lost income. But what a difference it made! We could never have done so much good with a gift of $400."

Loaning money, if you want the principal back, is no simple matter. This small book describes a number of strategies, including community development credit unions, which allow a church to have their loans professionally managed and safe. It is not that difficult to leverage the good your church can do through loans much larger than any gift you could afford to make.

This book, written at an easy reading level, opens up the subject of community loans. If you are interested in getting involved in your community, it is a good starting point.

Resources

- **Call for a Jubilee End to Nuclear Weapons and Domestic Violence** is a new study packet exploring links between state-sanctioned and domestic violence. It contains a three-session study guide, litany, prayers and confessions, and suggestions for action. Order from New Call to Peacemaking, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1958; $4 U.S.
- **With Hiroshima Eyes: Atomic War, Nuclear Extortion and Moral Imagination** by Joseph Gerson (New Society Publishers, 1995, $16.95 U.S./$19.95 Cdn. paper) asserts that the United States bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki to establish its dominance in the coming Cold War era.
- **Conrad Grebel College's Chapel Choir Tour** repertoire has been recorded on CD and audiocassette. For information, call Eleanor Dueck, music secretary at Conrad Grebel, at (519) 885-0220, ext. 226.
- **Faith Development Series**, focusing on an Anabaptist understanding of faith development during the life cycle, follows its "Children and Faith" with "Youth and Faith" by Abe Bergen, "Young Adults and Faith" by Ingrid Cornies, "Middle Adults and Faith" by Ken Hawkley and "Older Adults and Faith" by Katie Funk Wiebe. Order from Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484; $12.95 U.S./$16.95 Cdn. for set of five; or $2.95 U.S./$3.95 Cdn. each.
- **Two Amish Folk Artists: The Story of Henry Lapp and Barbara Ebersol** by Louise Stoltzfus (Good Books, 1994, $19.95 U.S.) tells the story of Lapp (1862-1904), a furniture maker and water color artist, and Ebersol (1846-1922), fraktur artist and painter.
- **You Can Lead Singing** by Glenn Lehman (Good Books, 1995, $6.95 U.S.) helps beginners learn to lead singing with the help of experienced song leaders. For congregational settings but adaptable for other groups.
- **Transforming Health: Christian Approaches to Healing and Wholeness**, edited by Eric Ram (MARC Publications, 1995, $21.95 U.S.), reflects on the biblical mandate for health, looks cross-culturally at Western medicine, and gives worldwide insights on health and healing. To order call 1-800-777-7752, or write 121 E. Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016-3400.
- **Nonviolence in America: A Documentary History**, edited by Staughton Lynd and Alice Lynd (Orbis, 1995, $24.95 U.S.), documents the history of nonviolence in the United States from colonial times to the present.
- **Worship Old & New** by Robert E.Webber (Zondervan, 1994, $18.99 U.S. hardcover) presents the biblical foundation of worship, its theology, history and practice.
- **The Christian's Guide to Designing a Loving Trust Plan** by Robert A. Esperti and Renno L. Peterson (Zondervan, 1995, $12.99 U.S.) gives an alternative to wills and probate.
- **Jesus Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus**, edited by Michael J. Wilkins and J.P. Moreland (Zondervan, 1995, $16.99 U.S. hardcover), examines the evidence and rebuts the views of the Jesus Seminar.
- **Fathering the Next Generation: Men Mentoring Men** by William J. Jarema (Crossroad, 1994, $14.95 U.S.) demonstrates, through portraits of 10 fathering styles, that it is possible for men to give and receive fathering at every stage of life.
- **With Roots and Wings: Christianity in an Age of Ecology and Dialogue** by Jay B. McDaniel (Orbis, 1995, $16.95 U.S.) brings insights from natural science, Christian theology and interreligious dialogue.
- **The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical—John Howard Yoder**, edited by Michael G. Cartwright (Eerdmans, 1994, $22.99 U.S.), includes hard-to-find texts and previously unpublished texts by Yoder on ecclesiological and ecumenical themes.

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Editorial

The demon called Bomb

The prophet Isaiah brought "the word of the Lord" to the "scoffers who rule this people in Jerusalem" (Isaiah 28:14). These rulers had made "a covenant with death" (v. 15), which probably refers to an agreement with Egypt that they believed would protect them from "the overwhelming scourge" (v. 15), or Assyria. Instead, Isaiah wrote, they should place their trust in "a foundation stone … a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation" (v. 16).

We live many centuries after those words were first addressed. But that message from the prophet comes to us as well: In what do we place our trust?

"When the United States made the nuclear bomb its weapon of choice in the struggle against evil," writes John Stoner in our lead article (see pages 3-5), "it rejected the way of Jesus and erected an idol in place of the God of salvation."

Richard T. McSorley has written, "The taproot of violence in our society today is our intent to use nuclear weapons." Why? Because nuclear weapons represent the ability of humanity to destroy itself, to take on a godlike character.

> **We must oppose the belief that violence is redemptive, that we may use the means of violating others to bring about some good.**

Among the many idols we must contend with today, surely the bomb is one of the most pervasive yet invisible. We can say, We didn't make it, didn't choose to use it, don't even want it. Yet it, rather, they, thousands of bombs, are there, hanging over the world like Damocles' sword. Like other idols, the bomb invites our trust. It asks us to believe that we are safe because it is there, that it is necessary for peace in the world.

The bomb's spokespeople used to claim we needed these weapons because the Russians had them. Now they simply skirt the issue, and we let them get away with it. Except for a few lonely voices, no one speaks out strongly against the presence of these weapons.

In the meantime (and a *mean* time it is), the United States sells more light weapons than all the other nations of the world combined, according to *Lethal Commerce: the Global Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons* (American Academy of Arts and Science). And now the U.S. Congress wants to give the Pentagon even more money than it had requested.

The god of destruction: Many knees are bowing to Baal, to the god of destruction, to the Bomb. And when we refuse to face and denounce this idol, we give it strength to affect our lives.

John Stoner draws a connection between the decision to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the plethora of violence in our society today. Once we have allowed the demon called Bomb into our midst, it brings seven other demons with it (see Luke 11:26).

How do we oppose this idolatry? How do we express our refusal to bow down to this god of metal?

One step is to remember, to remember what happened 50 years ago in Japan. We must also oppose the belief that violence is redemptive, that we may use the means of violating others in order to bring about some good. Jesus is our supreme example.

In the Bible column (page 10), John Stoner shows how Jesus opposed this myth of redemptive violence by loving Samaritans, whom the Jews of his day despised. And Jesus' willingness to go to the cross rather than call down an army of angels (Matthew 26:53) calls us to do the same.

In our daily affairs we must learn to stand against the idol called Bomb. We do this as we show kindness to others or when we seek reconciliation instead of vengeance. We also need to fill our minds with Scripture, with the way of Jesus, and not be seduced by calls for taking up arms—whether that be nuclear weapons or handguns.

We will want to ask ourselves how our tax dollars are being spent and how we should respond to that.

Let us listen to the word of the Lord and resist the temptation to make a covenant with death in order to protect ourselves. Instead let us place our trust in the only sure foundation, Jesus our Lord. *Gordon Houser*

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10 ways to help your survivors / p. 11

The potential of talk radio / p. 12

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For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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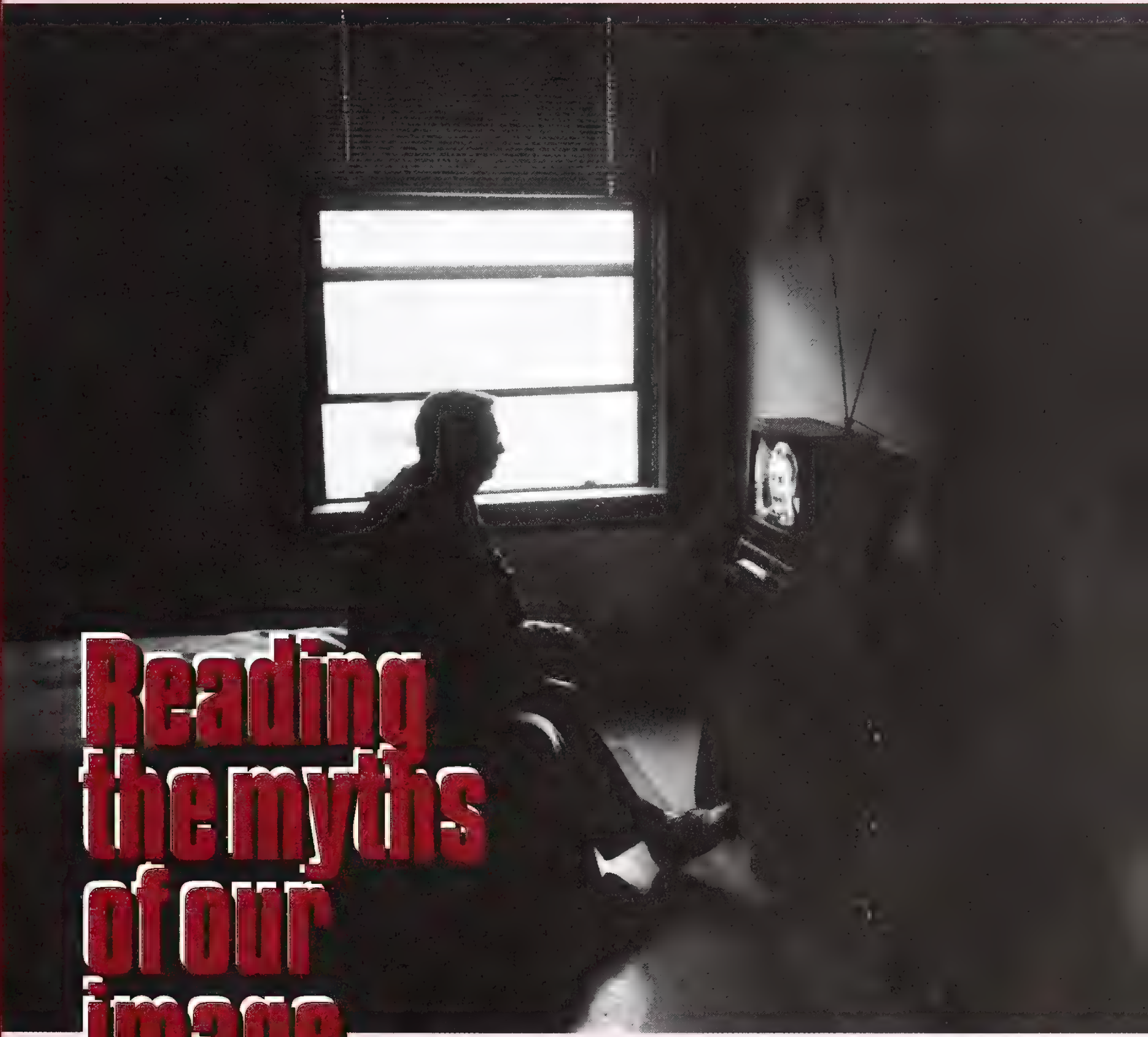
- Media and violence (see page 6)
- Hooked on soaps (see page 8)



Reading the myths of our image culture

Prologue

Like fish in the ocean we are surrounded by the media, yet we think little about their influence. Or if we do, we tend to focus on the more blatant instances of sex or violence.

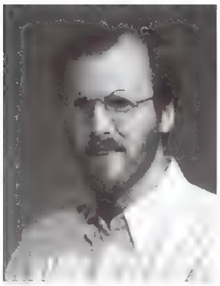
J. Francis Davis (page 3) helps us look at six myths of the image culture we live in. The effects of these myths are often subtle. In order to withstand their influence we will need to learn to read the messages that bombard us daily from various media.

In this issue you will also find resources for parents on the media (page 5), plus places to write or call to express your opinion to those who produce the programs we watch or listen to (page 6). We also provide questions you may ask while watching TV with kids (page 7).

Nancy Witmer writes about her addiction to soap operas (page 8) and how she dealt with it.

J.B. Miller (page 11) offers 10 ways to help your loved ones handle your financial affairs after you die or are incapacitated.

Read about a Mennonite woman who has her own talk show on a radio station in Wichita, Kan. (page 12). Kathleen Lehman is an example of one who is working in the media and trying to be a positive influence.



In our next issue look for stories and pictures from Wichita '95, the joint convention of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. *gh*

Next issue: Wichita '95

Cover: Photo by Jeffrey High

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

Editor: Gordon Houser

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Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail CompuServe 72147,2746

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Six myths of the image culture

Watch out for the power of pictures

J. Francis Davis

We see them everywhere: on billboards, in magazines, on bus placards. They come in the mail and in our Sunday newspapers: glossy pictures of women and men in silk, pictures of electric twin-foil shavers and Dirt Devil hand-held vacuums. And we see them on TV: white-lighted football stadiums, Wild West gunfights and blood-stained murder scenes.

Images. They are so compelling that we cannot not watch them. They are so seductive that they have revolutionized human social communication. Oral and written communication are in decline because a new form of communication, "communication by image," has emerged.

Images are pictures. However, in our culture pictures have become tools used to elicit specific and planned emotional reactions in the people who see them. These images are created to give us pleasure or to make us anxious when we forget our deodorant or lipstick. Images work best at this task when they are vivid and emotionally saturated.

In calling up emotions and memories, today's images take on mythic qualities. These new myths lie at the heart of modern American culture and illustrate the power of today's images.

Heroes: A myth has been defined as a story or idea that explains the culture or customs of a people. Often myths describe heroes or explain why a people revere the sun or why elders should be respected. Myths are the motivating stories or ideas behind common cultural practices.

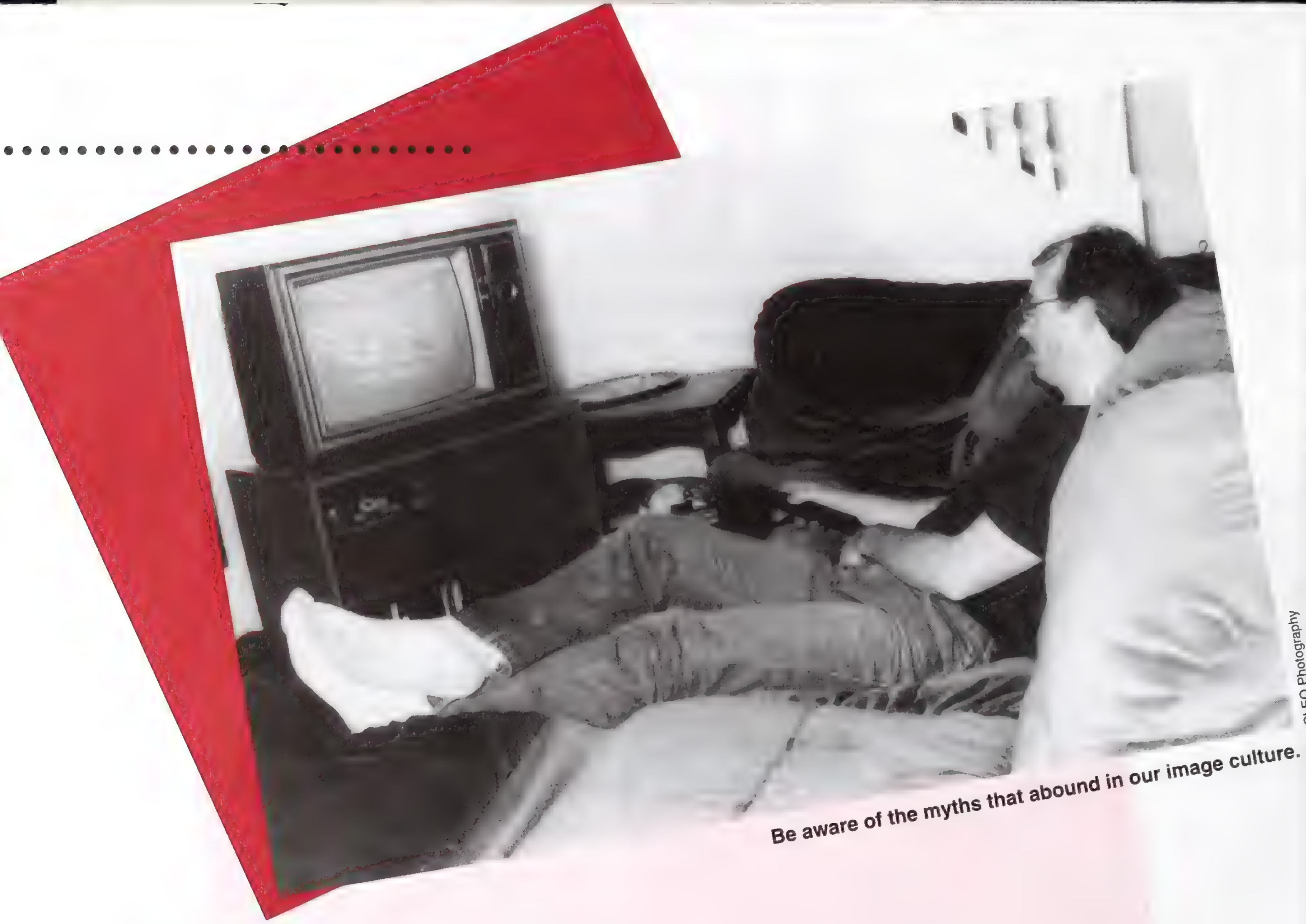
The key to recognizing the new myths of the image culture is to think of them as ideas that emerge from long exposure to patterns of images—not as myths that can be seen readily in one or two images. In fact, these myths emerge from a glut of images from many sources, including advertising, entertainment and news.

Today's images must be read on two levels. First is the immediate, emotional level on which we recognize the flag or the sexy body and react in a way that taps our inner stories or emotions. Second is a broader level that places an image in context with hundreds of others. This second level is where we see the new myths of the image culture clearly.

Myth #1: The world is a dangerous place and we need guns, police and military to protect us. Media critics often focus on violent entertainment dramas such as cop shows and movies like *Terminator 2*. But graphic reports of crime and terror on the news probably have greater influence in creating our feeling that the world is unsafe. Newsmakers feature shocking, violent stories because they sell newspapers and raise ratings. And our belief that news stories are "real" and thus could happen to us heightens their impact.

Myth #2: Leave it to the experts (usually white men). Again, "real life" images—or those we assume to be real—are most important here because they set the patterns for our assumptions about who has power. The authority figures we see presenting the national news are white, middle-aged men. And when an "expert" is interviewed about a crisis or program, as in a study of *Nightline* guests by the progressive media criticism organization Fairness and

In our culture pictures have become tools used to elicit specific and planned emotional reactions in the people who see them.



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Be aware of the myths that abound in our image culture.

Accuracy in Reporting, the pattern is predictable: nine out of 10 were white males. On *Nightline* and elsewhere, the views of women, people of color and representatives of alternative voices of all kinds are usually absent.

Images found in advertisements and commercials, as well as the national news, reinforce this power structure. Contrast the traditional sex roles of advertisements for Chivas Regal, showing successful professional men in business suits, with the stereotypic portraits of women and men in food ads that cast women as the kitchen "experts." Many other media images depend on predefined roles based on gender or race.

Myth #3: The "good life" consists of buying possessions. Living well is synonymous with wealth, according to the pictures and advertisements we see of homes and yards and cars. Big houses, yachts, fancy wine, dinner parties with silver and crystal, romantic evenings overlooking the ocean, vacations to Bermuda, sailing, BMWs, fancy two-oven sunlit kitchens; the list goes on. All are part of a luxurious lifestyle—if only we can afford it.

We can even purchase a little of it vicariously, if we can't have it all, by drinking fancy liquors or by driving a car that's out of our price range and financing it over 10 years. Some people call it status—but the myth behind the status myth is that we are getting the "good life."

Myth #4: Happiness, satisfaction and sex appeal are available with the next consumer purchase. A whole group of images implies that we are on the verge of being happy. For example, Hope perfume, Joy dishwashing detergent or, "Oh, what a feeling—Toyota!" People in these advertisements are gleefully happy, surrounded by loved ones, leaping into the air in rapturous joy. Often the instrument that brings this instant happiness is technology. We can buy the technology to make us happy.

Myth #5: Your body is not good enough. Many—if not most—of the women and men we see in the media are slim, muscular and good-looking. We, on the other hand, are always too fat, out-of-shape and smelly—though our friends don't always tell us so forthrightly. We are trained to worry, for example, that people will not even tell us if we smell bad because that kind of criticism is embarrassing.

Most disturbing, however, is the constant stream of perfect people advertising everything from auto parts to Hanes stockings. We are never told that almost all photo-advertisements are touched up to make their subjects look better, so that legs are slimmer, eyes are bluer and faces have no freckles.

Myth #6: Businesses and corporations are concerned for the public welfare. Short of an environmental disaster like the Alaska oil spill, we see few news stories (and no advertisements) that shed negative light on corporations or businesses. This is not to suggest that all these organizations are bad. It is worth noting, however, that most corporate images appear in ads purchased or stories placed by the businesses themselves, so it's hardly surprising that the messages we hear are relentlessly positive.

We see full-page color ads for Chevron talking about its concern for

Only when we learn to read these myths on a daily basis will we have the power to substitute other motivating ideas and goals of our choosing.

the environment. Or news items reporting that gasoline emissions are down because of a new formula developed by ARCO. Ads from tobacco companies like R.J. Reynolds discourage kids under 18 from smoking.

How are these myths hurting us? They have become a substitute for the search for meaning other generations sought in more expansive and significant ways. We no longer face uncharted oceans and unexplored continents, but with a universe of space and time to explore and uncounted problems to solve, we need not end all our quests at the shopping mall.

Only when we learn to read these myths on a daily basis will we have the power to substitute other motivating ideas and goals of our choosing. Only then can we stop blindly accepting the myths of the image culture.

J. Francis Davis is a media education specialist and consultant to the Center for Media and Values. This article is excerpted from Media & Values *(Winter 1992).*

For parents: resources on media

Books

- *Mythmakers: Gospel, Culture and the Media* by William Fore (Friendship Press, 1990). By an expert on television and religion.
- *Watching Television*, edited by Todd Gitlin (Pantheon, 1986). Essays on aspects of TV, including an excellent one on Saturday morning TV.
- *Honey I'm Home! Sitcoms: Selling the American Dream* by Gerard Jones (Grove Weidenfeld, 1992). Excellent study of American sitcoms.
- *Playing with Power in Movies, Television and Video Games* by Marsha Kinder (University of California Press, 1991). Traces the connections between movies, videos and video games to show how they position children both as a passive consumer and as an active player.
- *The Penguin Guide to Children's TV and Video* by Jack Livesley and Frank Trotz (Penguin, 1993). A discussion of children's television from Saturday morning to prime time as well as reviewing over 400 children's TV shows and videos.
- *Reading the News*, edited by Robert Karl Manoff and Michael Schudson (Pantheon, 1986). Essays on newspapers dealing with basic questions.
- *Kid Culture: Children & Adults & Popular Culture* by Kathleen McDonnell (Second Story, 1994). Highly readable exploration of kids and popular culture.
- *Media Literacy Resource Guide* (Government of Ontario Book Store, Fifth Floor, 880 Bay St., Toronto, ON M7A 1N8; $7). A guide developed to help teachers teach concepts of media literacy.
- *Seeing Through Movies*, edited by Marc Crispin Miller (Pantheon, 1990). Essays about movies and their influence in our lives.
- *Are They Selling Her Lips? Advertising and Identity* by Carol Moog (William Morrow, 1990)
- *The Screening of America: Movies and Values from Rocky to Rain Man* by Tom O'Brien (Frederick Ungar, 1990)
- *Taming the Wild Tube: A Family Guide to TV and Video* by Robert Schrag (North Carolina University Press, 1990). A constructive role for TV in the family.
- *Understanding Popular Music* by Roy Shuker (London: Routledge, 1994). Introduction to the history and meaning of rock and popular music.

Source for all media books

- Theatrebooks, 11 St. Thomas St., Toronto, ON M5S 2B7; (416) 922-7175; 1-800-361-3414; fax (416) 922-0379. They will accept major credit cards and purchase orders.

Other resources

- *Beyond Blame: Countering Violence in the Media*. A multimedia kit for parents and discussion groups. Center for Media Literacy, 1962 S. Shenandoah, Los Angeles, CA 90034; 1-800-226-9494. Ask for catalogue of other kits on the media.
- *Entertainment Weekly*, P.O. Box 60890, Tampa, FL 33660-0890. Weekly magazine on newsstands; good section on videos and film for children.
- *Minding the Set*, booklet and video developed by the Alliance for Children and Television (ACT) and Rogers Cable to help parents and children take control of their television. Contact Lisa Warner, Rogers Cable, 855 York Mills Road, Don Mills, ON M3B 1Z1; (416) 446-6795; $17.20.

Media and violence

6 myths of media violence

1. I watched TV violence when I was a child and I turned out OK, so it is not a problem.
2. Violence in media just reflects violence in society.
3. Decisions about viewing violence should be left only to parents.
4. Violence is a natural part of all drama, and watching violence can reduce anger in certain individuals.
5. We live in a country that constitutionally protects free speech. I don't like violence in the media, but I don't want censorship either. It's a no-win situation.
6. Violence is what people want to see. If people don't want to see it, they can turn it off or not spend their money on it.

Center for Media Literacy, Los Angeles

4 effects of viewing media violence

1. Increased aggressiveness and anti-social behavior
2. Increased fear of becoming a victim
3. Increased desensitization to violence and victims of violence
4. Increased appetite for more violence in entertainment and real life

Center for Media Literacy, Los Angeles

Express yourself

Where to write, whom to call

- **ABC**, 77 W. 66th St., Ninth Floor, New York, NY 10023; (212) 456-1725
- **CBC**, Box 500, Station A, Toronto, ON M5W 1E6; (416) 205-3311
- **CBS**, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 975-1556
- **CITY/Much Music**, 299 Queen St. W., Toronto, ON M5V 2Z5; (416) 591-5757
- **CTV**, 42 Charles St. E., Toronto, ON M4Y 1T5; (416) 928-6000
- **Fox Broadcasting Co.**, Box 900, Beverly Hills, CA 90213
- **Global**, 81 Barber Greene Road, Don Mills, ON M3C 2A2; (416) 446-5311
- **MTV**, (212) 258-8000
- **NBC**, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020; (212) 664-2074
- **PBS**, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314-1698; 1-800-328-7271
- **Radio Canada**, CP 6000, Montreal, QC H3C 3A8
- **TV Ontario**, 2180 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4S 2B9; (416) 484-2600

- **CRTC**, Public Affairs, Ottawa, ON K1A 0N2; (613) 997-0313
- **Federal Communications Commission**, Complaints & Investigations Office, 2025 M St. N.W., Room 8210, Washington, DC 20554

- **Alliance for Children and Television**, 205-344 Dupont St., Toronto, ON M5R 1V9; (416) 515-0466
- **Association for Media Literacy**, 40 MacArthur St., Weston, ON M9P 3M7; (416) 394-6992
- **Jesuit Communication Project**, 300-47 Ranleigh Ave., Toronto, ON M4N 1X2; (416) 488-7280

Questions to ask while watching TV with kids

Consequences of violence

1. What would happen in real life as a result of this violence?

2. Who would be sad? Who would cry?

3. Who would fix everything that has been broken? Who would pay for the damage? How much would it cost?

4. Who would have to go to the emergency room? How long would it take to be seen by a doctor? How long would the patient have to stay in the hospital? Who would pay the doctor bills?

5. If the people die, how would their families feel? How would it change their lives?

6. What would happen if you tried that at home?

7. What would you do and how would you feel if you saw this happen in real life?

Good guys/bad guys and heroes

1. Why do the "bad" guys use violence?

2. Why do the "good" guys use violence?

3. Why are they fighting, chasing or shooting each other?

4. Who hits first? Who hits back? Why? Are they looking for revenge? Is the violence solving their problems?

5. Do the "good" guys think they can do anything they want just because they are the good guys?

6. Are there any limits to what the "good" guys will do to protect people?

7. Will the "good" guy ever go to jail for killing people? Who are more violent—the good guys or the bad guys?

Reality vs. fantasy

1. The people you see are pretending. They are paid to act this way. How can you tell?

2. Most of what you see is fake. Think of as many things as you can that are fake. For example, the guns are all plastic. The blood is red dye or the furniture is easy to break. The fight scenes are all choreographed—they plan it first so each person knows exactly when and where to move or fall down.

Glamorization of violence

1. Why is this kind of violence shown on TV and in the movies? Why do some people think violence is entertaining?

2. Do the characters seem to enjoy violence? Does the violence make them seem "cool"?

3. What kinds of lives do the characters live? Do they work? Do they have families? Do they always wear the latest fashions? Do their clothes ever get dirty? Are they rich? Do they have jobs? Where do they live?

4. Do we admire the characters no matter how violent they become?

5. Does music play during real-life fights?

6. If this scene was left out, how would it affect the story?

Real-life coverage/re-enactments

1. Why do TV producers go to the trouble of re-enacting these scenes?

2. If the same thing happened to you, would you want a camera crew photographing you?

3. Are there places that TV cameras shouldn't be allowed to go?

4. We're watching only part of the whole story. Why do you think this part was chosen to be on TV? What parts of the story are missing? What do you think will happen next?

5. Does watching help solve the problem we see?

6. Why would people behave like this? What do you think people learn by watching this?

Stereotypes/role models

1. Are the violent characters more often men or women? What languages do these characters speak? Are they African-American, Caucasian, Hispanic, Asian, Middle Eastern?

2. What are the women wearing during the fight scenes? What are the men wearing during the same scenes?

3. Who are killed—women or men? Older or younger people? What is the race or ethnicity of the people who get killed?

Reprinted from Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media *(Center for Media Literacy)*

Watching soap operas became an addiction that was ruining the author's life with God, her family and herself.

Hooked on soaps

Nancy Witmer

This must be one of the much-maligned soap operas," I told myself, as I settled more comfortably into the reclining chair. I quieted my conscience by rationalizing, "As a writer, I really should know what's going on in the world."

For the next hour a bewildering barrage of characters marched across the TV screen. They traveled to exotic places and dined in elegant restaurants. They argued, patched up their quarrels and made love in wild abandon. I watched, mesmerized.

To my delight, I discovered that two more equally titillating shows followed the first. Occasionally I glanced at the stack of unwashed dishes in the kitchen sink, but my attention was drawn back to the action on the 20-inch screen.

The next afternoon I settled in front of the TV again. I overruled my protesting conscience with the pious-sounding excuse, "I'm only watching so I can intelligently condemn such shows." This time I recognized many of the characters and identified with them. The next morning I promised myself I would not watch the soaps that day, but again I succumbed to the desire to see what was happening in the lives of my newfound heroes and heroines.

After watching the soaps for one week, I was hooked.

For the next two months I rearranged my schedule so I could be at home for "my shows." Previously I had reserved afternoons for grocery shopping, appointments and other away-from-home activities. Now I completed my errands in the morning or postponed them until later in the day.

When I had to attend an afternoon function, I anxiously watched the clock and rushed home to catch as much of the programs as I could. When the telephone rang during the shows, I cut the conversation short so I could hurry back to the living room. Although the soaps dominated my life, I went to great lengths to hide this fact from my husband and my friends. During these months I never caught up with my work because I was wasting so many hours in front of the TV.

Addiction: My schedule wasn't the only part of my life adversely affected by my addiction. My devotional life suffered. The Bible seemed dull. During private devotions and in public worship services my mind often wandered to the lives of my soap acquaintances. When I tried to pray, God seemed far away.

My TV habit hurt my marriage. I compared my husband with the suave men in the soaps. These men always had time to talk to their partners. They noticed when the women in their lives wore new outfits or had their hair done. These wealthy men planned intimate candlelight dinners and excursions to romantic places. Our own simple pleasures of walking the dog or hiking in the woods seemed mundane when compared with dinner at exclusive clubs or cruises to exotic islands. Our cozy home looked old-fashioned and ill-furnished when compared with the luxurious ones portrayed on TV.

My children suffered from my habit. My youngest son arrived home from school during the final segment of the last afternoon show. Since I didn't want him to see what I was watching, I curtly ordered him to go to his room or to stay in the kitchen. Furthermore, my TV viewing habits sabotaged my attempts to control how my sons used the television. When I objected to their watching certain types of shows or protested that they were spending too much time in front of the TV, they said, "Why can't we see this program? You watch TV for three hours every afternoon."

My TV habits dealt a blow to my self-image. When I compared my hair, my face, my figure and my wardrobe with what I saw on the soaps, I found mine wanting. I grew dissatisfied with my husband, my home and myself.

Marital infidelity: During the months I watched the soap operas, I saw sinful lifestyles glamorized while virtuous ones were nonexistent. The shows portrayed marital infidelity, flirtations, dishonesty, greed, treachery and extravagant living as the norm. The behaviors I saw on TV contradicted every value I held dear. The Holy Spirit convicted me daily that such shows should have no place in my life, yet I continued to make flimsy excuses for watching them.

I was jolted out of my complacency when I heard a minister denounce the soaps as a subtle form of pornography. I recoiled from the suggestion that I was enjoying pornography, yet as I considered the illicit relationships that pervaded the soaps and the total disregard for moral purity, I was forced to concede that the minister was right. Although I would never have allowed a pornographic magazine in my home, I was permitting all sorts of lust and impurity to come in via the soap opera.

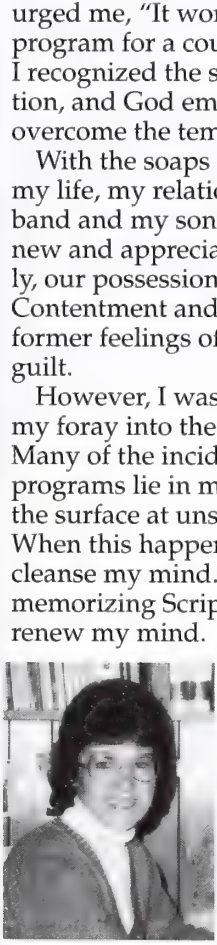
When I realized the seriousness of my actions, I cried out to God for forgiveness and asked him to help me overcome my addiction to these programs. Immediately I sensed a new freedom in my spirit. God was no longer unreachable.

With God's help I stopped watching the soaps "cold turkey." During the first weeks my mind frequently flashed back to episodes from the programs and I yearned to know how the characters were resolving their dilemmas. To put some distance between me and the TV, I often planned to be out of the house for part of the afternoon. When I was at home, I kept busy on projects in rooms other than the living room.

For a long time a persuasive voice urged me, "It won't hurt to watch one program for a couple of minutes." But I recognized the source of this suggestion, and God empowered me to overcome the temptation.

With the soaps no longer a part of my life, my relationship with my husband and my sons improved. I took a new and appreciative look at my family, our possessions and our lifestyle. Contentment and joy replaced my former feelings of dissatisfaction and guilt.

However, I was not unscathed by my foray into the world of the soaps. Many of the incidents I saw on the programs lie in my mind and come to the surface at unsuspecting moments. When this happens, I ask the Lord to cleanse my mind. Reading and memorizing Scripture also helps renew my mind.



Nancy Witmer lives in Manheim, Pa.

The behaviors I saw on TV contradicted every value I held dear. The Holy Spirit convicted me daily that such shows should have no place in my life, yet I continued to make flimsy excuses for watching them.

Beware mean dog

Jeffrey High

James Klassen

The dog barks
The barking frightens people
The dog's owner barks directions
The intimidated people follow blindly
No one notices that dog and owner have no teeth
Christ pulled them on the cross

The TV glows
The glowing lures people
The advertisers spread temptation
The seduced people follow blindly
No one notices that TV and advertisers have no truth
Christ exposed them on the cross

James Klassen lives in Broken Arrow, Okla.

Letters

THOUGHTS ON THE 'GOOD WAR'

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ted Grimsrud for his article "Not a Good War" (June 13 issue, page 10). I am reminded of an address by Bishop G. Bromley Oxenam at a convention of farmers in St. Louis shortly before the United States declared war. When World War I ended, he said, only the killing stopped. The fierce competition for control of the world's economic resources went on unabated, now the killing has resumed.

We humans can always find good (?) and sufficient reason why we must kill each other and justify our greed. *Orville W. Baer, Trenton, Ill.*

Ted Grimsrud (June 13 issue, page 10) correctly claims that violence won World War II, and provides valuable evidence for earlier Allied irresponsibility. I want to uphold the Mennonite witness to nonviolence and nonparticipation in war. However, Nazism was worse than Grimsrud allows.

His inability to imagine that the Nazis "would possibly have killed even a fraction as many people as the war did" misunderstands the 12 years in which the Third Reich killed millions of noncombatants outside of war. The war served as a cover for genocide. Already before the war the Nazis were killing helpless civilians (e.g., the mentally and physically handicapped). The doctors who supervised these murders, and the killing technology, were directly transferred to extermination camps such as Auschwitz.

The Allied demand for unconditional surrender in World War II can be understood in light of what Saddam Hussein did to the Kurds after the Persian Gulf War. An undivided Germany, or any surviving Nazism, posed a threat of future aggression in Europe. After World War I it was claimed that Germany had been on the verge of winning until a "stab in the back" came from the German Jews.

It is no consolation to be told that "the Nazi system would have collapsed under its own weight at least as quickly as communism." Seventy-five years of communism (under which a billion people still live) have resulted in tens of millions of deaths through genocide (in the Soviet Union, China, Cambodia, et al.). More people have been killed in this century by their nominal rulers than in wars between nations.

The unfolding of an anticipated disaster brings its own special anguish. Over a decade ago, Rwanda was identified as an example of a situation where genocide could erupt again. Ted Grimsrud and I would agree that we need to support redemptive alternatives to violence.

"Rule by brute force" may indeed be the enduring legacy of Nazism. Yet, after the war, the human community also responded to the barbarism by asserting universal human rights. The world can choose to promote human rights as the lesson learned from World War II. *Jon Olson, Amherst, Mass.*

AIM FOR SENSITIVITY

Re the article "Closure Sought in Processing of Abuse" (March 14 issue, page 19): "The Western District Conference statement to the church affirmed the importance of placing the responsibility for Ediger's action on [him] rather than on the congregation."

I take exception to this statement. In the Anabaptist sense of community, isn't a fall of one the fall of all? Other questions I would ask are, Who pastors the pastor and his family? Who is supportive when the pastor and his wife have marital struggles? How can a potentially abusive situation be noted before it happens? How can these be prevented in the future, before lives are destroyed for all

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Haiti—Our mountain excursions have included meetings with many people—strong, determined people who live in a land that has lost its place in the "cycle of life." The farmers have planted their last seeds, but the seedlings are dying in the scorching sun. Grandmothers no longer find the herbal medicines they need. People die on the long, hot trail to the health clinic. Chickens die from lack of drinking water. Children break their teeth climbing down a steep ravine to fetch drinking water at the spring. Young men beat up others to get to the water first. Schools lack books, buildings and students. The land is parched. Only cactus, thorn trees and goats thrive. Houses are deteriorating. There is no grass for new roofs and no water to make mud to repair walls. Many houses are deserted in this desolate land.

But thousands of people remain in Haiti's Northwest Department. They are happy to meet with us. They hope for a better future. They want water for gardens. They want their grandchildren to have more than just peas and wheat. They dream of mangoes, corn and sweet potatoes.

Back in Port-au-Prince I eat pineapple, mangoes, bananas and oranges. I pause and remember the children in the Northwest. They have never seen these fruits, and in that moment I realize that most of them never will. My pineapple suddenly is bitter. Who am I that I should eat this fruit that rightfully belongs to the Haitians? While Haitian children eat surplus wheat and peas that were grown to feed North American animals, I sit here and eat their fruit.

I am now in the Artibonite, in a nice house with a tin roof (that leaks), wooden rafters, a cement floor and a porch that faces a rich valley with gardens and fruit trees. The local rice fields are not far away. The near-daily rains wash the dust away and bring mud into the house. Our Haitian helper scrubs the floor, cooks local rice and beans and keeps the fruit bowl full. Not one child has asked me for money or food. But last evening as I braved the rain to find the latrine at the back of our property, I again thought of the children of the Northwest. And this morning at daybreak as I poured water over my body, I again saw children trying to wash in a cupful of water before going to school. Some stay home for shame. The pain of Northwest Haiti follows me. *Lena Siegers, from Hamilton, Ont., works with Christian Peacemaker Teams* concerned? Where are redemption and reconciliation in all of this, or do we only want the "sinner" to pay his dues?

Let us trust and pray for continued healing in these matters and work toward an attitude that we all need to learn from the failures of a brother or a sister. Let us aim for awareness, sensitivity and compassion as we challenge one another to live as Jesus taught us. Above all, let us recognize individual and corporate responsibility for our actions and be ready to forgive when we fail. *Esther Kisamore, Colorado Springs, Colo.*

TRINITY NOT SCRIPTURAL

The first three articles of the proposed Mennonite Confession of Faith are "God," "Jesus" and "the Holy Spirit."

Although the first article says God is triune, the fact that there is no article for "the Father" implies that God and the Father are interchangeable, which may offend strict believers in the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity. However, the doctrine of the Trinity only became a binding theological dogma for Christians in 325 A.D., in the era of the emperor Constantine, the same era that gave us the Christianized version of the pagan just war theory, which Mennonites reject. Since the doctrine of the Trinity is a later theological development rather than a scriptural doctrine, it should not be considered binding on Mennonites.

Sixteenth-century Anabaptism had its non-Trinitarian wing. Adam Pastor was excommunicated by Menno Simons for believing that Jesus was God's Son but not God incarnate and that the Holy Spirit was the power of God but not a third person. Despite being excommunicated, Pastor had many followers at the time. There was also a 16th-century Anabaptist group called the Polish Brethren, or the Socinians, that explicitly rejected the doctrine of the Trinity in their confession of faith.

Since the doctrine of the Trinity is unscriptural and also hard to reconcile with biblical monotheism, I cannot accept it and therefore wish that Mennonite confessions of faith would at least be neutral on this subject and omit the unbiblical words trinity or triune. *Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

Send letters to **The Mennonite**, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Fiscal health

10 ways to help your survivors

Be prepared for passing on your financial information.

J.B. Miller

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

What would happen if you became incapacitated or died tonight? How would the people around you feel about the financial records you kept? Is there someone who could pick up the pieces and make sense of the financial matters you are responsible for? Or if someone else in your household is taking care of the finances, do you know enough about them to take control should something unfortunate happen to that person?

Part of being a good steward is making certain that someone can take over your financial responsibilities. Here are 10 things to consider:

1. Make certain you have a durable power of attorney as well as advance medical directives. This allows another person to assume responsibility for decisions, including financial transactions, which will need to be made in the event of your incapacitation. The power of attorney will be effective only while you are living and will end at your death.

2. Keep your records organized. In most families one person handles the finances, such as paying the bills. Records should be kept to inform another person what has happened.

3. If you are married, talk about your finances with your spouse. While one spouse may not have the interest or time to be involved, keep the other person informed of what is happening. If you are not married, tell someone you trust where important documents are kept, or write a letter.

4. Complete a list of important financial information. Journals, often called "document finders," are available to list such information. These booklets are generally free and helpful.

5. Do good estate planning. Proper estate planning will give survivors a sense that you gave careful consideration to all aspects of your life. It will also save substantial estate taxes as well as make estate settlement less time-consuming and painful.

6. Consider living trusts. If you provide income for a spouse or children, know they will be burdened by managing the finances after your death. A trust gives this responsibility to a professional.

7. If you are not the person handling the finances in your household, ask questions about financial matters. Don't assume everything is in order. The more information you have, the easier it will be to assume responsibility should it be necessary.

8. Keep a list of professionals who can assist with the transition. Names of attorneys, accountants, bankers, financial planners, stock brokers, insurance agents and other professionals will be helpful to have on hand.

9. Make certain your important documents are accessible. Can someone other than you gain access to the safe deposit box? Can someone else write checks if you are incapacitated? Are all insurance papers in a safe and accessible place?

10. Complete a letter outlining the disposition of any special items you want given to friends or family members. If you have items you want one person to have, write down such requests.

The act of helping others with the responsibility of managing your affairs—through good planning and proper record keeping—is an act of love.

Mennonite Foundation has prepared a document finder that will help you list all your important financial information in one place. To request a free copy, call **1-800-348-7468.**

Profile

The potential of talk radio

Kathleen Lehman gets the information out.

Carol L. Schrag

Flanked by a control panel and microphone, Kathleen Lehman is ready to talk. She hosts "The Kathleen Clark Show" Monday through Friday, 4 to 5 p.m. on KFH 1330 in Wichita, Kan.

"I long for the show to be informational, entertaining and educational," she says. "The main event on the show is not me but the guest and the callers. I'm the vehicle through which people can have the privilege of visiting with someone they ordinarily wouldn't talk with," she says.

"I strive to not let my show become antagonistic or confrontational. That's a good way to get ratings, but my goal is to get information out and expose people to issues that further their own lives."

Kathy feels she owes her guests basic civility, time and understanding. "We have all come through different experiences to the belief system we claim. Everyone has basic human dignity. This comes from a relationship with God."

> **"There's a lot of potential in talk radio. I'm influencing and offering people things they might not have thought of before."**
> ***Kathleen Lehman***

KFH, Kansas' first radio station, was moving to a talk-radio format when Kathy interviewed for the job. "I remember former program director Barry Casey asking if I had any experience in talk radio, to which I replied 'No, but I did inherit the talking gene.'

"When I got this job in 1993, we were heading into an election year. As a result I've had a lot of political guests—on the federal, state and local levels—including Kansas Senator Bob Dole and then Kansas Representative Dan Glickman. Former Senator Paul Tsongas was also a guest."

A smile creeps over Kathy's face as she talks of her other guests: a professor from Eastern Mennonite College, people from InterFaith Ministries, a sexologist, a dog trainer, cooking experts and sports figures. Wichita State University professor James McKinney, who appeared on her show the day of the Oklahoma City federal building bombing, is an expert on terrorism.

Among Kathy's favorite guests is Senator Georgia Davis of Mississippi, who was the first elected black female senator. Kathy said Davis had to establish herself as a legitimate representative of the people and fought what it meant to be female and black in a white, male-dominated arena.

Brian Patrick

A sense of perspective: *Kathleen Lehman in the studio*

Kathy also enjoyed Saul Chaplain, who wrote more than 600 musicals and worked with such greats as Julie Andrews; and Bill Reese from InterFaith Ministries Children's Hunger Coalition, who shed light on the hunger and poverty in Kansas.

"Radio is a happy medium," Kathy says. "There's a lot of potential in talk radio. I'm influencing and offering people things they might not have thought of before.

"My most difficult task is keeping a sense of perspective. I feel what I'm doing is a mission, but I can't get maudlin about it. I'm dealing with so many divergent interests, including financial, ratings, researching various topics and making contacts with guests.

"It's important that my relationships with God, my family, my church and the community be kept in the right working order.

"The times we are living in appear chaotic and frightening. But other times have been equally frightening. The world is shifting and changing. It's important to keep relationships intact, and not to get discouraged. As we move from one stage to another, we need to keep the faith and have fun in the process."

Kathy, who has an English and journalism degree from Stephens College in Columbia, Mo., has other duties at the station, which include writing ad copy, co-producing and hosting a one-hour news show and filling in at another radio station.

"It is paramount to be grounded in my beliefs. Controversy pulls from all different directions. People continue to challenge my beliefs. Either you agree and are their buddy or, if you disagree, people feel the need to conquer.

"There is a tremendous amount of fear, and people express that in bold terms over talk radio. This is partly due to the fact that they are disembodied from the guest or talk-show host.

"Some people are bothered by the fact that I'm in the media. Usually this is because they feel threatened, jealous or ignorant. Media people can't be put in little boxes. The world is much bigger than any organized political, religious or economic system. The path each person chooses must lead to their Creator."

Kathy and her husband, Mick, are members of Hope Mennonite Church in Wichita. They have three children, Jason, Joel and Joy.

Carol Schrag lives in Newton, Kan.

News

MCC names new director

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Ronald J.R. Mathies of Elmira, Ont., will become Mennonite Central Committee's next executive director in June 1996. Mathies, 55, is currently director of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont.

Mathies will replace John A. Lapp, MCC's executive director since 1985. Last year Lapp announced his plans to retire.

"The challenges for Christian mission as we move toward the 21st century are enormous," Mathies says. "The exact dimensions and shape of the changes that will be required in the future are not clear, but it is probable that MCC, along with other church and secular institutions, will experience significant reconfiguration. New forms of governance will be required to make the agency both more global and more local at the same time."

Passionate compassion: He describes MCC's mission as faith driven. "MCC's mandate as part of the global church is to celebrate God's call to mission: to provide passionate compassion in the midst of suffering, to be a witness 'In the name of Christ' in the midst of struggle."

"The search committee was impressed with the qualities of many of the candidates," says Paul Quiring of Fresno, Calif., who chaired the search committee. "However, Ron Mathies was selected because of his MCC experience, because he is committed to the church and because we felt he understands how to lead MCC into the next century. We felt Ron was both a leader and a manager. We believed it was important to find someone with both sets of skills."

"Ron is well acquainted with MCC and MCC with Ron. This basis of understanding will allow Ron to begin working without a lengthy training period," said Quiring.

Mathies' involvement with MCC dates back to 1964, when he and his wife, Gudrun Linda Wohlgemut Mathies, went to the African nation of Malawi as MCC teachers. The Mathies family lived in Malawi until 1973. In 1978 the family returned to Africa and Mathies worked as MCC country representative and regional coordinator for programs in Swaziland and Southern Africa until 1981. Since returning to Ontario, Mathies has served on many MCC boards, including chairing Mennonite Central Committee since 1989.

Mathies

Mathies is a member of Kitchener (Ont.) Mennonite Brethren Church and currently serves on the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Board of Faith and Life. He and his wife are the parents of Anali, Kristen and Mark Mathies.

Mathies earned a doctorate in international/development/comparative education from the University of Toronto in 1988. He also holds a master's degree in extension education from the University of Guelph (Ont.) and a bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of Waterloo.

Conrad Grebel names its next president

Waterloo, Ont. (CGC)—John E. Toews will become president of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., Jan. 1, 1996. Toews currently serves as professor of New Testament interpretation at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif.

"Conrad Grebel College has undergone a significant period of transition," says Andrew Reesor-McDowell, chair of the board of governors. "We are especially pleased that John Toews will bring gifts and abilities that will serve the college well in the years to come."

Toews, 57, previously served at Conrad Grebel College as assistant

Inside the news

Drug trade confronts Mexican Mennos / p. 14

B.C. women's conference proceeds despite loss of MCC support / p. 15

Bethel, Bluffton review positive but reports room to improve / p. 16

Mennos in B.C. rethink evangelism goals / p. 17

Rwandan relief opens doors for evangelism / p. 18

Dairy project sends milk around the world / p. 19

The Israeli Defense Force detained two American members of Christian Peacemaker Teams July 12 as they attempted to accompany water trucks going to a Palestinian home near Tel Rumeida, a Jewish settlement in the heart of Hebron. Palestinian Hanni Abu Haikel had expressed concern about his lack of water to CPT team member Cliff Kindy. Israeli settlers had been preventing the water trucks' delivery, blocking the road and stoning the vehicles. Kindy offered to accompany the water shipments. The soldiers detained Jeff Heie and Kindy, forcing Heie to stand in the hot sun by the Israeli flag without water until Kindy broke the soldiers' orders and carried water to him. During the detention, two settlers, one an elderly woman, threatened the lives of Kindy and Heie. The CPTers were questioned by local officials and were released late that evening. On July 15 the Hebron CPT group released a "Statement of Conviction." It says, in part, "We utterly reject the use of force to save our lives should we be caught in the middle of a conflict situation or taken hostage. In the event that we die as a result of some violent action, we reject the use of violence to punish the people who killed us. Should our deaths come as the result of attacks by soldiers or settlers in Hebron, we ask that our deaths be regarded as no more tragic than the murders of dozens of Palestinians who have died here in the last decade."

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont., will celebrate its 50th anniversary Sept. 30-Oct. 1. As part of the celebrations, an alumni choir and orchestra will perform Haydn's "Creation."

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Bike Ohio is an Oct. 6-8 bike tour being planned to benefit Mennonite Central Committee. For information contact Daryl Arner, 4397 Back Orrville Road, Wooster, OH 44691, (216) 264-5579.

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The Great Plains Seminary, North Newton, Kan., has announced its fall and spring lineup of classes. In the fall the seminary will offer "Reading the Bible." "Beginning Greek" and "Formation in Ministry" will be offered in both the fall and spring. "The Corinthian Correspondence" and "Jerusalem Seminar" will be offered in January 1996. In spring 1996 the seminary will offer "Anabaptist History and Theology." Contact the seminary at Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117, (316) 283-6300.

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Refusing to work on Sunday led to a three-year lawsuit against Wal-Mart for Mary Kay Marquardt. When Wal-Mart came to her hometown of Manitowoc, Wisc., Marquardt hoped to find a job, but Wal-Mart wouldn't let her have her sabbath off. For over three years she battled the company, and last year she won. The company paid her $7,000 in back pay and interest and paid the $23,000 fee incurred by her attorney, who had taken the case at no charge three years before. "Wal-Mart made a lot of inappropriate references to imply that she was in this for the money," says her lawyer, Victor Plantinga. "This was not really a money-maker for her at all." "I saw that you ought not to work on Sunday in barter and trade," Marquardt says. "I saw Sunday as a day that was supposed to be separate to God, to honor him." ***(Liberty)***

professor of religious studies from 1970 to 1973 and as dean of academic affairs from 1971 to 1973. He holds a Ph.D. in New Testament studies from Northwestern University-Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., and has done post-doctoral studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif., and at Cambridge University in England.

Toews

He has taught at Fresno Pacific College (1963-68), and Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan. (1973-1977).

Toews has been active in church life, including roles as chair or director on over a dozen task forces and church committees. Since 1993 he has been secretary of the Mennonite Brethren General Conference. He and Arlene, his wife, have three adult children.

Toews replaces Ernie Regehr, who served for a one-year period after the departure of president Rod Sawatsky in July 1994. Regehr will remain at the college until the end of August. From September until December, vice president academic and academic dean Hildi Froese Tiessen will serve as acting president. *Betti Erb*

Mexican Mennos face presence of drugs in colonies

Cuauhtemoc, Mexico—When God-fearing Mennonite farmers saw strange crops in Isaak Enns' cornfields, they sought answers from the local authorities. The response sent them running for their Bibles.

Mr. Enns was growing marijuana.

For Mexico's Mennonites, the discovery two years ago on the Enns farm in Chihuahua state was the most jarring evidence yet of the extent to which the modern world had invaded their close-knit community.

Concerns about automobiles replacing horses and buggies and the proliferation of radios and television sets have faded, replaced by alarm at the corrosive effect of the drug trade.

Since 1989, U.S. and Canadian customs officials say, more than 30 seizures of drugs have involved Mennonites. Officials say the seizures represent part of a sophisticated organization run by Canadian-Mexican Mennonites that smuggles millions of dollars of drugs inside cheese, furniture and the tires of tractor-trailers bound for Canada.

Canadian drug enforcement agents say that the Mennonite drug ring accounts for roughly 20 percent of the drugs smuggled into Canada.

"Unfortunately, the lust for ill-gotten drugs crosses all barriers and borders, whether they're ethnic or religious," said Joseph R. Weber, deputy special agent with the U.S. Customs Service in El Paso. "The Mennonites are proving that."

Leaders of the Mennonite smuggling ring have formed links with more established Mexican drug kingpins, U.S. and Mexican authorities say.

And now, in the midst of the worst economic crisis in a decade and a severe drought, the temptation of quick profits threatens to entice even more Mennonites to become drug smugglers.

"I have been approached by friends who urge me that on my next trip to the border I hide an amount of marijuana inside the cheese," said Jacobo, a young cheesemaker who asked that his last name not be used. "My immediate answer was no. Now, there is no rain, everything is so expensive, and I'm having a hard time selling cheese to anyone. It's hard to turn down an easy $1,000."

Initial shock: The first sign of trouble occurred on Thanksgiving Day in 1989. According to court records and U.S. Customs agents, Cornelius Banman was heading to Canada through El Paso with what appeared to be a truckload of traditional Mennonite-made furniture.

The sight of humble-looking Mennonites crossing the border into downtown El Paso is so common that U.S. Customs officials were ready to wave Mr. Banman through without a full inspection.

But a drug-sniffing dog began to bark loudly and paw the ground near Mr. Banman's truck. When surprised agents ripped open the furniture, they found 238 pounds of marijuana destined for Canada inside.

"We were shocked," said one agent, who asked not to be identified. "All these years, and we had never suspected a thing."

Mr. Banman was convicted of drug smuggling and is expected to be released from federal prison next year. He declined to be interviewed.

The biggest seizure so far was made in April, when a drug-sniffing dog named Justice became interested in a tractor-trailer that 31-year-old Jacobo Froesse-Friessen was driving to Canada.

According to court records, Froesse-Friessen was arrested and charged with attempting to smuggle 761 pounds of marijuana across the border. He sits in El Paso County Jail awaiting trial. Through his attorney, Froesse-Friessen declined to be interviewed.

Rooted in history: Only a few Mennonites are involved in the drug trade, authorities said. Most Mennonites in Cuauhtemoc continue to follow a way of life that for decades has remained mostly unchanged.

The Mennonites arrived in Mexico in March 1922, after the Canadian government threatened to draft them into the army and incorporate them into the country's educational system.

About 5,000 Mennonites, encouraged by the land reform enacted after the Mexican Revolution, settled in northern Mexico.

"I hated everything about Cuauhtemoc, especially the desert, the heat and lack of rain," recalled 84-year-old Jacobo Wall, one of the original pioneers. "I still hate it, but I can't seem to leave it."

"In the 40 years that I have been here, I would say the best thing that has happened for Mennonites is an increased understanding between them and the Mexicans," said teacher Helen Ens. "The worst thing I've seen is the introduction of alcohol and drugs. I can't say that the two go hand in hand, but drugs are affecting everyone and threaten much of what we have known and the good we still try to maintain."

Gulping down a beer, a 17-year-old Mennonite named Pancho, his strawberry-blond hair tucked under a baseball cap, sarcastically said he hadn't yet "had the pleasure" of smoking marijuana, although a couple of his friends were now "hooked on it."

"I hear the stuff doesn't leave hangovers," Pancho said with a laugh. "I hear it can also make you rich."

Such attitudes have led to great soul-searching among the Mennonites in Cuauhtemoc. As in the past, they have responded to the present crisis by trusting in the power of prayer.

Two years ago, after the discovery of marijuana plants growing in Isaak Enns' cornfields, Mennonite families gathered at the farm as Mexican military helicopters sprayed herbicides over the area.

> **"I have been approached by friends who urge me that on my next trip to the border I hide an amount of marijuana inside the cheese. ... It's hard to turn down an easy $1,000."**
>
> ***Jacobo***

A minister read passages from the Bible while the Mennonites bowed and prayed silently that this would bring an end to the drug plague.

"We thought that would be the end of the marijuana," said farmer Abraham Ens, 24, who participated in the prayer session. "We thought the evils had fled the fields."

They haven't. And today Mr. Ens, who has replaced his horse and buggy with a moped, gazed over the same cornfields and searched for something positive to say.

"Yes, what happened here is tragic," he said. "But at least people now know that we're not perfect. We're only human." *Alfredo Corchado, reprinted with permission from* The Dallas Morning News

B.C. women's conference goes on despite MCC

Clearbrook, B.C.—A Women in Ministry conference went ahead as planned May 26-28 after losing Mennonite Central Committee B.C. support. The inter-Mennonite conference gathered approximately 125 women from Canada and the United States.

The event was designed to help participants "worship God and celebrate a global sisterhood with Christian women." A committee appointed by the MCC B.C. Women's

Gordon Houser

Peter and Lita Rose Burbank receive the Lark Award, given each year for outstanding work in church planting and evangelism. They work on the Navajo reservation in Arizona and New Mexico. Allan Yoder (right) of Mennonite Board of Missions presented the award in June at Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference.

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New Hopedale Mennonite Church, Meno, Okla., observed its centennial this month, and Mount Olivet Mennonite Church, Huron, S.D., has celebrated its 50th anniversary. Superb Mennonite Church, Kerrobert, Sask., celebrated the 50th anniversary of its dedication April 23.

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The world has over 48,000 nuclear warheads today with a total explosive power equal to 900,000 Hiroshima bombs. If all planned cuts in nuclear weapons were implemented, in the year 2003 the world will still have some 20,000 nuclear weapons with the explosive power of over 200,000 Hiroshima bombs. Over time, the United States has built 70,000 nuclear warheads. The arsenal as of 1993 stood at 16,750. In 1994, 9,225 more were deployed. The former Soviet Union has built 55,000 warheads. Its 1993 arsenal stood at 32,000, with 11,000 deployed in 1994. (*The Nuclear Examiner*)

The Italian Parliament abolished the death penalty in a vote Oct. 5, 1994. There are now 54 countries which do not have capital punishment. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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Misfortune fell early on the summer tour of Sold Out, a drama troupe from Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C. On May 22 in Fresno, Calif., two team members were driving a truck when a car ran a red light and hit their car on the passenger side at 55 mph. The truck flipped on its side and slid several hundred feet. No one was hurt, but the truck was totaled. Earlier, in Aurora, Ore., one evening the group found their trailer padlock snipped and $3,500 in personal items stolen. After filing a report, the group drove on to California. That night at 11 the group discovered their van and trailer had been stolen from the hotel parking lot. The next day the college's administration rented sound equipment and sent another van and trailer down to the group. But before that van got to Seattle, its transmission gave out. A local service station got the van back on the road the next day, and Sold Out canceled only one program of its tour. "I've seen how I need to trust God at every task level and depend on him fully," says Paul Hiebert, who was in the truck accident. The group is slated to return to British Columbia Aug. 19.

Concerns Committee planned the conference. It featured Dr. Elizabeth Tapia, an ordained United Methodist minister and professor at Union Theological Seminary in Dasmaris, Philippines, and Susan Classen, MCC worker for 10 years in Bolivia and El Salvador.

Initial fears: Concerns about the conference emerged when some local Mennonite Brethren leaders felt that the conference would challenge the denomination's position prohibiting women from serving as senior pastors. Concerns intensified when a number of pastors decided that liturgy written by Tapia for use in the Philippines contained "radical feminist and New Age" elements.

At first, MCC B.C. continued to support the conference because "MCC represents Mennonite church members with many points of view." However, as concerns about the liturgy grew, MCC withdrew support as "a matter of accountability" and because of fears that local support for MCC would suffer.

Vange Thiessen, conference organizer and chair of MCC B.C. Women's Concerns Committee, expressed regret that local leaders chose to focus only on "suspect components" of the liturgy, "not the commonalities of faith. … Just because it looks unusual to us, we should be careful not to judge people from another culture from our own perspective." Thiessen adds that the liturgy in question was never intended for use at the B.C. conference.

The conference's three plenary sessions explored the themes of solidarity through suffering, hope for wholeness and spiritual nourishment.

During the Friday evening session, Classen spoke of the importance of embracing the suffering of others as an "opportunity for life-giving transformation," since "God is present in a special way in brokenness and pain."

Saturday morning, Tapia encouraged listeners to become living water. Emphasizing the importance of theology that begins with questions, not answers, she suggested spirituality requires both reflection and action.

During Saturday afternoon, participants could choose from workshops on topics such as spiritual direction, dance as embodied faith, women and their intellect, women around the world, and mothers and daughters. Sunday morning's Communion service began with a liturgy using the imagery of mixing, rising, baking and feeding bread as a metaphor for spiritual experience. Later Tapia extended the metaphor to include rice, the nutritional mainstay of Oriental cultures. Speaking of Christ as the living bread of reconciliation, she urged her listeners to function as spiritual bread by participating in community, hospitality, accountability and inclusiveness.

Before leaving, participants were given an opportunity to sign a statement expressing concern that "a biblical model of consultation and mediation was not followed when concerns about the conference emerged," and that "hasty conclusions about theological orthodoxy were made, based on incomplete information and inadequate understanding of the complex issues involved in cross-cultural theological dialogue." An invitation to enter into "restorative dialogue" was extended to both the MCC B.C. board and the B.C. Mennonite Brethren Conference executive.

Since the conference the organizing committee has met and decided not to disband. Plans are to hold a one-day seminar next spring that will continue to encourage and affirm Christian women. *Maryann Jantzen*

Church-college ties have room to improve

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The relationship between the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the two GC U.S. colleges is strong, but there is room for improvement.

That's the conclusion of the reviews of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Bluffton (Ohio) College, which were conducted by the GC Higher Education Council earlier this year. The council examined the final reports at a June 9-10 meeting in Chicago.

From the outset, it was clear the two colleges acknowledge and value the Mennonite heritage and faith. Bluffton chooses to describe itself as a Christian college within the peace church tradition, while Bethel more nearly resembles a denominational college with a focus on service. The religion departments of both include courses on Anabaptism.

In addition, a majority of faculty,

board members and administrators participate in Mennonite congregations. However, neither college requires all its staff to be Mennonite.

The student bodies are no longer predominantly Mennonite: At Bluffton, 12 percent of its 787 traditional students come from a Mennonite background; at Bethel 40 percent of its 644 students are Mennonite.

Several college staff indicated that it is critical for the church to have an adequate supply of leaders who are trained at Mennonite colleges. They thought that if Mennonite pastors do not receive their undergraduate training at Mennonite institutions, Mennonite young people are less likely to attend colleges such as Bethel and Bluffton.

The student bodies of Bethel and Bluffton are no longer predominantly Mennonite.

The Higher Education Council felt the two colleges should come to a clearer understanding about what constitutes an adequate Mennonite presence among students, faculty and administration members on their respective campuses.

The council also encouraged the colleges to further articulate Mennonite core values, branching beyond the focus on peace and service. "How does one nurture Mennonite young people into a stronger commitment to and understanding of the Mennonite faith?" asked the report.

On several occasions Bluffton staff said they felt the church does not realize that the Mennonite colleges are essential for the health of the church. They felt the church is inclined to take them for granted. Bethel staff thought the partnership could be strengthened as well.

The council suggested the development of a "College Importance and Visibility" checklist for district conferences and, perhaps, for local congregations. The checklist would identify the level of interest in areas such as student recruitment and fund raising.

The review team found a relative lack of concern about the possible integration of the General Conference and the Mennonite Church. Integration was scheduled for a vote at the end of July, at Wichita '95.

CMinBC rethinks evangelism goals

Chilliwack, B.C. (GCMC)—"Joined Together in Christ" was the theme of this year's annual sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia (CMinBC) held here June 9-10.

In his opening address, chair Walter Paetkau from Clearbrook noted that several years ago CMinBC had been challenged by A Call to Kingdom Commitments to double membership and plant 10 new churches by the year 2000.

Now, five years later, the numbers have changed little, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to impose a vision on congregations.

"There is a hunger and a need out there for spirituality, for restfulness and quiet, and maybe we can plug into that," said Paetkau.

In a similar vein, speaker John Unrau from Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Clearbrook, B.C., pointed out that "numbers were a result back then [after Pentecost], and now they are a goal." We need to find the fullness of the Spirit and the love of Christ that will draw people to us before we will grow, he said.

The vision of five years ago may not be bearing a bumper crop, but at least one small cluster gained notice with the acceptance of Crossroads Community Church, Sardis, B.C., as a CMinBC member.

Much of the reporting at the sessions took place in small focus groups, which offered detailed reporting and more opportunity for delegate discussion.

Budget: Treasurer LaVerne Peters noted that the conference's $15,000 surplus at the end of 1994 was owing strictly to last-minute "scrounging" for funds from individual donors, not to increased congregational giving.

This meant that the budget presented for 1995—calling for $322,700 but down significantly from last year's asking—showed some major cuts. However, the executive hoped that by 1996 some of the programs affected could potentially be reinstated. *Roma Quapp*

The document used by Mennonite conference leaders to discipline ordained ministers in cases of sexual misconduct contains provisions that bias the investigation in favor of victims, says a report released in June by the Mennonite Lawyers Association. The report notes that the guidelines "repeatedly refer" to the complainant as "the victim" before the intervention committee has completed its investigation of allegations. The guidelines also note that "the victim" may be urged to seek legal counsel, but such advice is not offered to the accused. The report says the role of the intervention team should be a judicial one, not a therapeutic or pastoral one. "We welcome the input of the lawyers association," says John Esau, General Conference Mennonite Church director of ministerial leadership services and one author of the guidelines. But he cautioned that the association's report is not the first legal advice the conference has heard. He also stressed that the church and the laywers' group have different, though complementary, priorities. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Sandra Unruh (MCC)

Five-year-old Adriano is learning self-confidence at vacation Bible school at the Belo Jardim, Brazil, community center. MCC workers Sandra Unruh and Sally Jacober work with Adriano and some 100 children. MCC workers, with community assistance, have run this daily, two-month-long vacation Bible school for the past several years.

Moscow has extended the term of active duty in the Russian Army from 18 months to two years, and Defense Minister Pavel Grachev has launched an aggressive conscription drive. The push is part of an attempt to bolster the demoralized and disorganized army. Last year, 84 percent of men of draftable age avoided army service—legally and illegally—up from 48 percent in 1989. (*World Press Review*)

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Promise Keepers, the Christian men's organization, is opening a Canada office. The organization's legal status is not yet fully established in Canada, but the group has had a full-time staff person in Canada since March, establishing an office in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia. Promise Keepers was founded in 1990 by Colorado University football coach Bill McCartney to be "a movement calling men to reconciliation, discipleship and godliness." While the heart of Promise Keepers' work involves small groups of men, nearly 700,000 men will participate in 13 major rallies being staged in stadiums across the United States this year. (*Christian Week*)

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Fifty years ago, five months before the atomic bombing of Japan, at least 80,000 Japanese civilians in Tokyo died in the worst air raids of World War II. Some estimates of the bombing of Tokyo put the death toll as high as 197,000, almost twice the number of immediate casualties in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima (66,000) and Nagasaki (39,000). All told, 334 B-29 Superfortresses dropped 70,000 incendiary bombs weighing some 1,539 tons. Around 270,000 buildings and 15.8 square miles were razed. Victims were burned in their houses, overcome by fumes or boiled alive as they leaped into seething canals. A U.S. strategic bombing survey concluded that "probably more people lost their lives in Tokyo in a six-hour period than at any [comparable] time in the history of man." (*World Press Review*)

Rwandan relief paves way for evangelism

Winnipeg (MCCC)—A year ago few North Americans had heard about Rwanda. But last spring and summer as many as 1 million people lost their lives during civil war there. In mid-July 1994 more than 1 million more fled to neighboring Zaire. The central African nation now occupies a horrific place in our memory and imagination.

Not only did Rwanda's tragedy result in one of Mennonite Central Committee's largest food relief efforts ever, it also brought North American and Zairian Mennonites together in new ways to help Rwandan refugees. And it has led to open doors for evangelism.

Beginning with its first shipment of food in May 1994, MCC has helped provide assistance worth $5.5 million U.S./$7.8 million Cdn. to Rwandan refugees.

The assistance has included food, clothing, blankets, seeds and funds to set up and operate four camps for about 6,000 refugees near the Zairian city of Bukavu. Two six-person teams, made up of volunteers from Mennonite churches in Zaire, North America and Europe, worked with the refugees.

Seeing MCC's work in Bukavu, the Church of Christ in Zaire invited Mennonites to begin evangelistic and church-planting efforts there.

"One reason the invitation was extended was because of interest in the Mennonite peace position," says Terry Sawatsky, co-director with his wife, Cathy Hodder, of MCC's programs in Zaire. "Church leaders in Bukavu have said there is a need for a church that teaches and models peacemaking."

Sawatsky says that Rwandan refugees are also asking for more information about peacemaking and reconciliation. Future plans include the possibility of inviting people from Africa and North America to visit the camps to do workshops on nonvio-

Killers mingling with orphans

Editor's note: *Terry Sawatsky of Winnipeg witnessed the mass exodus of Rwandans into Zaire on July 14, 1994. He and his wife, Cathy Hodder, helped head up Mennonite Central Committee's assistance for Rwandan refugees in Bukavu, Zaire.*

Bukavu, Zaire (MCC)—One image from last year reappears in my thoughts. The folks at the church guesthouse in Bukavu, where we lived, had rented their meeting room to a group of refugees for several days. Busy with relief work, I paid little attention to who was there.

Nearby stood an orphanage for Rwandan children, both Tutsi and Hutu, victimized by the war.

Just before lunch one day, the children were in front of the meeting room at the moment when the refugees broke for lunch. Some adults played with the children. Later I learned that the group of refugees was the Rwandan government-in-exile—ministers of the government, military leaders and influential members of society—planning strategy. These were the people accused of planning and perpetuating the killings in Rwanda.

To this day I have trouble coming to terms with the conflicting images of adults mingling with children—children whose status as orphans was a direct result of the carnage carried out under the adults' orders.

How can we be a witness in loving all those involved in this conflict? Caring about orphans and widows is not difficult. They seem helpless and we should or must help. But what of ex-government ministers and young men who killed? We would rather keep them at a distance. We call them killers and war criminals and feel somehow they deserve what they have received.

Yet according to our faith we should love them as we are loved by God. "Love one another as I first loved you"—no qualifiers, no exceptions. I often think we are only half complete as long as we continue to keep this second group at a distance. *Terry Sawatsky*

Jon Warren (MCC)

A horrific place in our memory: *Rwandan orphans in Zaire.*

lence and the theological basis for pacifism.

"We're not under any illusion that we can solve a conflict that has lasted hundreds of years," Sawatsky says. "But God has given us a message and the opportunity to play a small part."

MCC staff members also see the potential to learn from Zairians. MCC workers were awed by the generosity shown by the Zairians, who were themselves "struggling to feed and clothe themselves and their families," according to Arli Klassen, who helped direct the agency's response from Akron, Pa.

Team members from North America and Europe were amazed by how Zairian Christians in Bukavu invited refugees to live in their church sanctuaries and camp on church grounds. Observing the generous offer, MCC relief worker Dave Klassen of Kitchener, Ont., wondered "if we North American Christians would allow people to erect tents, light fires and build latrines on our manicured church lawns."

Also inspiring were the individual stories of courage and generosity shown by refugees like Aphonsine, a 19-year-old girl orphaned by the bloodshed. The young woman who had lost her entire family took 146 other orphaned children under her care, sleeping with them, comforting and loving them. "When I am with the children I feel good, like I am with my family," she told MCC workers.

With the situation in the four camps stabilized, MCC has ended its direct involvement with the Rwandan refugees although workers will continue to monitor the situation. The agency has now turned its attention to neighboring Burundi, where tension between Tutsis and Hutus threatens to boil over into another bloodbath. MCC has sent short-term "peace presence" volunteers to that country to deliver assistance and try to defuse some of the tension between Tutsis and Hutus.
John Longhurst

Dairy project sends milk around the world

Ephrata, Pa. (MCC)—Milk from Ben Kauffman's farm is nourishing people around the world.

"Today a few pounds (of milk) and then a few pounds the next day, and by the end of the year we believe we have fed another family in a hungry part of the world for a year," says Kauffman, a dairy farmer in Chester County, Pa.

He and Erma, his wife, visited the Mennonite Central Committee warehouse here June 7 to see some of the powdered milk their raw milk contribution helped purchase. This powdered milk was being loaded into a 40-foot container for shipment to Haiti.

MCC and the Atlantic Dairy Coop-

Jeff Friesen was featured in *Sports Illustrated* as the youngest player in the National Hockey League. He moved to San Jose, Calif., from Meadow Lake, Sask., where his grandfather started a General Conference Mennonite Church congregation years ago. Last year Jeff signed a $3.2 million contract with the San Jose Sharks. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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Italy's senate recently voted to give its citizens the right not to serve in the army. Now Italians can choose nonmilitary service and receive the same rights and access to state jobs that former soldiers receive. (*Transcontinental Peace Newsletter*)

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Japan is the only industrialized country to experience decreasing crime rates over the past 50 years. Between 1948 and 1988, offenses per 100,000 fell by 30 percent, according to Seattle law professor John Haley. Over the same 40 years, he says, the number of offenders dropped by 27 percent. There was also a 40 percent drop in homicide, a 60 percent drop in robbery and an 80 percent drop in rape. Haley says Japan more than other nations fosters a sense that the major concern of the justice system is not to punish but to ensure that the offender doesn't reoffend and to correct the harm done. He says that fewer than 5 percent of convicted people go to prison, despite a 95.5 percent conviction rate. "The only cases where the convicted person goes to prison is to secure the safety of the community over the short term," he says. He says that the more "lenient" the treatment of the offender and the higher the involvement of the community, the lower the rate of recidivism. "The rate is less than 20 percent for cases the police don't report; less than 30 percent for cases where the prosecution doesn't prosecute. It doesn't reach 50 percent until you put people in prison." (*Accord*)

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge has signed a death warrant for journalist and black activist Mumia Abu Jamal, setting Aug. 17 for his execution. Lawyers defending Jamal, convicted in 1982 of killing a police officer, filed for a new trial in early June. They say they have unequivocal proof that Jamal "was the victim of a politically motivated, racially biased prosecution in which evidence of his innocence was suppressed." Deborah Mackson of the Partisan Defense Committee, an organization supporting Jamal, called the warrant "the first explicitly political execution attempted since the government murdered Julius and Ethel Rosenberg." Jamal is the author of *Live from Death Row*, a book that includes a collection of commentaries he wrote in 1994 for National Public Radio, which the network canceled. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Christianity is a faith at risk, according to a new survey by Barna Research Group. Examining 13 measures used annually to evaluate the health of evangelical Christianity in America, the organization reported a decline in Bible reading, which reached a new low for the past nine years; a drop in adult Sunday school attendance (another record low), and decreased identification as a Protestant. Nine measures remained unchanged: church attendance, church volunteerism, four measures of belief in Christian doctrines, the proportion of adults who claim to be born again, the proportion who are evangelicals, and the percent who embrace a biblical definition of God. One measure increased: the number of adults involved in a small group that meets for Bible study, prayer or Christian fellowship, other than a Sunday school class or 12-step group. (*The Christian Leader*)

erative sponsor the raw milk for dried milk trade-off program. Through it, cooperative members designate the number of pounds of milk they wish to contribute each day from their farm to help feed hungry people through MCC.

The Atlantic Dairy Cooperative automatically deducts the value of the contributed milk and sends the money to MCC. MCC in turn purchases powdered milk for distribution in needy parts of the world.

"It's so easy," says Kauffman. "If I were to write the check at the end of the year, it would be difficult. But Atlantic takes it off the check until I tell them differently. Sometimes I don't think we give enough. We are blessed in so many ways. Farm technology is so great. We are able to do so much with so little effort. Our 60-cow herd can almost be handled by one person."

Members of the Atlantic cooperative provided most of the funding for the 8.5 tons of non-fat dry milk powder MCC sent to Haiti in early June.

Since Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's reinstatement last fall, the island nation has not yet had sufficient time to improve its local food supply. Hospital reports say malnutrition among both children and adults has increased 60 percent in the last three years.

Milk powder is valuable in helping children avoid protein-calorie malnutrition, which can cause stunted growth, susceptibility to infections and perhaps brain damage. MCC sends non-fat milk because milk without fat is easier on the digestive systems of malnourished children.

Ten pounds of whole milk produce just over one pound of dry milk powder. Recipients can reconstitute one pound of powder to provide 17 cups of liquid milk. Nutritionists and health workers in Haiti supervise the mixing of milk powder with pure water. *Everett Newswanger, reprinted from* Lancaster Farming

Record

DEATHS

Erwin C. Goering died July 4 at age 81. Goering served as director of MCC personnel in Civilian Public Service during World War II, and coordinated post-war reconstruction camps in Germany 1957-59. He was executive secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church 1960-62. He also served in fund raising and development for Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Bloomington (Ill.) Mennonite Hospital; Freeman (S.D.) Junior College and Academy, and for Offender/Victim Ministries in Newton, Kan. He was a member of Bethel College Church, North Newton.

Goering

MINISTERS

Curt Claassen, First Church, Berne, Ind., will retire from ministry at the end of September.

Darlene Derksen is youth coordinator at Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church.

Norma Peters Duerksen, Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio, was ordained July 16.

David Keim is serving a summer internship at First Church, Hillsboro, Kan.

John P. Klassen will begin as pastor at Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church Jan. 1, 1996.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen was installed as pastor at First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, June 11.

Edward Renich retired in June as pastor at West New Hopedale Church, Ringwood, Okla.

Ron Roth is serving a summer internship at Hoffnungsau Church, Inman, Kan.

Royce Vogt is serving a summer internship at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Church.

Peter B. Wiebe, Trinity Church, Glendale, Ariz., will retire from the ministry summer 1996.

Donald D. Yoder, Koinonia Church, Chandler, Ariz., will retire from the ministry summer 1996.

Henry P. Yoder, Shalom Church, Tucson, Ariz., will retire from the ministry summer 1996.

WORKERS

Janet and **Walter Bergen**, Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, B.C., are on North America assignment until Aug. 23. The Bergens work in Moscow with MCC and COM.

Diane Kinser Born, Peace Church, Lawrence, Kan., has been appointed director of finance and production for FLP.

J. Bergen

Gordon Flight has been named principal at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Dawn Froese, Bethel Church, Inman, Kan., is finance assistant for FLP.

Isbrand Hiebert, Steinbach (Man.) Church, will be editor of *Der Bote*, beginning January 1996. He replaces **Erwin Strempler**.

Richard A. Kauffman, administrative vice president at AMBS, will become associate editor of *Christianity Today* this fall.

Enid and **Mel Letkeman**, Zoar Church, Langham, Sask., returned to Canada in June after completing a four-year COM assignment in Recife, Brazil.

Alice Ruth and **Robert Ramseyer**, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., have completed their COM assignments in Japan.

Carmen Schmidt, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., will begin as secretary for the Commission on Education beginning Aug. 22.

Kay Soltesz has been named associate professor of dietetics and director of the dietetics program at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Michelle Sommer, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., is part-time bookkeeper for Faith & Life Bookstore, Newton, Kan.

George and **Tobia Veith**, Cornerstone Church-Mennonite, Saskatoon, are on a one-year North America assignment.

W. Bergen

Born

E. Letkeman

M. Letkeman

G. Veith

T. Veith

AMBS—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
FLP—Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan.
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

They have served in Kowloon, Hong Kong, with COM. Next year they will begin new work in Macau.

Lois and **Peter Voran**, Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., have completed their one-year COM assignment in Japan.

Jane Voth, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., is part-time production assistant at FLP, Newton, Kan.

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Send letters of inquiry and resumes to **Nancy Umphress, Human Resources Director, Maple Lawn Homes, 700 N. Main St., Eureka, IL 61530**. Equal opportunity employer

Eastern Mennonite University director of libraries: Open summer or fall 1996. Provides leadership and coordination to planning, budgeting, organizing and staffing the Sadie Hartzler Library, including the Menno Simons Historical Library. Works closely with information systems staff. Represents library matters to the administration and serves as liaison with the library publics. Qualifications: MLS required. Second master's degree in theology or another content area highly desirable. Experience in academic administration and information systems, creative leadership, management expertise and interpersonal skills essential. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Send resume to **Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**.

Music director: Maplewood Mennonite Church seeking 1/3-time music director with some worship planning responsibilities.

Send resume **by Aug. 25** to **Maplewood Mennonite Church, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815**.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **assistant director in the personnel department** (Akron, Pa.). This three-year position is available Oct. 1. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have a college degree, interviewing and/or counseling experience and MCC service experience. Writing and oral communications skills, initiative and travel are necessary.

Interested people in the U.S. contact **Carol Eby-Good, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. In Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381**. Applications due **Sept. 8**.

Reviews

FILMS

HISTORICAL SPACE THRILLER

Apollo 13, *written by William Broyles Jr. and Al Reinert, produced by Brian Grazer, directed by Ron Howard*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Apollo 13 comes as a welcome relief to Hollywood's otherwise light summer fare. Through attention to detail and development of character, director Ron Howard proves real life to be more suspenseful than the imaginary worlds of caped crusaders and futuristic technolawmen.

Memories of the Apollo 13 mission are faint against most Americans' vivid recollections of the Apollo 11 moon landing. Maybe the technospeak of NASA scientists—surely their efforts to publicly downplay the danger of the mission—kept America removed from the desperation of Apollo 13, when seemingly everything that could go wrong did.

The movie will remind Americans of a time before national cynicism when the space program helped us believe there were still frontiers for America and the human spirit. Ed Harris, as flight director Gene Kranz, is the steely model commander who can rally the troops and achieve the unachievable. His team's effort turns a failed mission into a "giant leap for mankind."

Howard balances the immediate suspense of systems malfunctions (milking the dramatic moments for maximum effect) with the more subtle suspense of human relationships: a wife's love and fear, children's curiosity and dependence, colleagues' envies and intimacy. The relationship between astronaut Jim Lovell (Tom Hanks) and his wife, Marilyn (Kathleen Quinlan), drives the movie as we first weigh with them the risks and dreams of walking on the moon, then tremble with them through the consequences of their decision.

Universal Pictures

Survival course: *From left: Tom Hanks, Bill Paxton and Kevin Bacon*

Apollo 13 is a rare achievement—both a historical film and a box office smash. Don't miss it.

BOOKS

DISCIPLE'S CRITERIA

Discipleship *by J. Heinrich Arnold (Plough Publishing House, 1994, 279 pages)*

Reviewed by Leonard Nolt, Boise, Idaho

What does it take to be a disciple? J. Heinrich Arnold's *Discipleship* sets the criteria, and it's not easy. He contrasts the weakness and depravity of people with the power and holiness of God, and reminds us that we cannot change our sinful state. According to Arnold, "God's love is like water: it seeks the lowest place." In that is our only hope for qualifying as a disciple.

Discipleship advocates an ascetic lifestyle. The author died in 1982, but his timely instructions are like drops of water to a spiritually parched world. The would-be disciple is admonished to read the Bible daily and learn of the greatness of God. Disciples are changed by God, not by their own self-help efforts. The emphasis is on Jesus. Following him is a radical choice to make and, contrary to popular opinion, Jesus doesn't promise economic security.

The chief weakness of this book is the author's frequent use of "men" and other male nouns and pronouns when writing about both men and women. Although Arnold does mention sisters a few times, his male-focused writing became annoying to me and detracted from the message of this book. The language he uses fails to acknowledge the existence and importance of women and that will turn off many readers.

If his editors had used inclusive language this book's credibility and audience would have been greatly increased. In spite of that it's still a good review of the qualifications for discipleship and reminds the reader of how vividly a disciple's life should contrast with those who don't care about discipleship.

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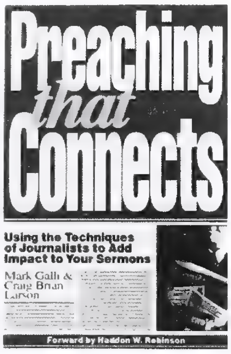
BEYOND McPREACHING

Preaching that Connects: Using the Techniques of Journalists to Add Impact to Your Sermons *by Mark Galli and Craig Brian Larson (Zondervan, 1994, 160 pages)*

Reviewed by Matt Friesen, Wichita, Kan.


Preaching that Connects
Using the Techniques of Journalists to Add Impact to Your Sermons
Mark Galli & Craig Brian Larson
Forward by Haddon W. Robinson

Joining our frequent debates following our weekly preaching course at seminary was the question, How does one share important biblical and exegetical discoveries from research in a way that does not bore one's listeners to death (quite literally in Paul's case!—Acts 20:9).

Although skeptical at first (I feared Zondervan had produced a "McPreaching" text claiming to answer all of life's homiletical questions), I was pleasantly surprised that Galli and Larson do what they say.

From the outset the authors confess that this is not a preaching textbook. They clearly acknowledge that preachers need to have sound exegetical and homiletical skills, as well as a sense of the Holy Spirit in the sermon preparation and presentation.

Releasing themselves from the responsibility of addressing the myriad of preaching issues, they are free to build their case for the use of journalistic techniques in preaching.

They argue that preaching is called to reclaim the need to communicate without being seduced by the temptation to entertain.

While such a goal would likely be embraced by all preachers, the tension soon returns as the authors argue that "a good editor edits by a simple but effective motto: the reader first. Preachers would do well to preach by a similar motto: hearers first."

Such a statement might sound like the first step toward sacrificing a gospel that is not always pleasant.

On the contrary, Galli and Larson argue that respect for the listener does not require a watered-down gospel but reveals something about the preacher's care for both the biblical text and the hearer's experience.

With many concrete examples, the authors give suggestions for how to nurture creativity, build introductions, illustrations, stories and conclusions. They take time to comment about structure, style, poetic use of words and the pace.

Just as they say, *Preaching that Connects* gives solid tools to help preachers care for both their hearers and the Word.

CONFLICT 101

Resolving Disputes in Christian Groups *by Marlin E. Thomas (Windflower Communications, 1994)*

Reviewed by Julie Hart, Newton, Kan.

Thomas seeks to provide practical insight and resources to church members for dealing constructively with conflict. The compact book includes insights from theology, psychology, sociology, conflict management and communication. Care is taken throughout to establish a biblical grounding for concepts and suggestions.

Part One introduces the dynamics of conflict. The discussion of the five levels of conflict contains instruction for church members to determine a dispute's seriousness, constructive strategies to preserve relationships and appropriate expectations for the outcome. While disputants themselves are given tools and suggestions for negotiating solutions at the lower levels, Thomas wisely cautions disputants experiencing level three or above disputes to seek third-party mediation.

Conflicts within Scripture are carefully documented in Part Two. Erring on the side of quantity over quality, the section chronicling problem-solving in the early church loses focus. In identifying diverse leadership styles among biblical characters he draws important conclusions. First, the effectiveness of a style, from charismatic to autocratic, depends on the situation. Second, God is able to work with a variety of leadership styles to accomplish goals.

An array of personality differences affecting conflict are identified in Part Three. While an excellent range of topics are included, from the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory to issues of power, the explanations are often too brief to be internalized and applied unless the reader has had previous exposure.

The discussion in Part Four of conflict management strategies is useful in its church applications and examples. Particularly useful is the section on developing a church planning retreat. Here Thomas obviously has firsthand experience and provides detailed outlines for effective group process.

In the hands of a leader trained in conflict management, the book would be useful for an adult Sunday school class, where chapters may be discussed more fully. The book conveniently includes study questions, role plays and other activities.

Resources

- **Church World Service 1996 Global Calendar** is now available. The calendar is $20 U.S. A set of 10 full-color greeting cards taken from the calendar photos is $10 U.S. Order three calendars and get a set of notecards free. Prices include postage. Order from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515-0968.
- **About the Holy Land: A Resource Packet for Churches** includes fact sheets, a liturgy, posters and more covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Order from Christian Peacemaker Teams, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680-6508; $10 U.S.
- **Understanding Gangs** by Carol Duerksen (Faith & Life Press, 1995, $9.95 U.S./$14.25 Cdn.) is the latest release in the Fast Lane Bible Study Series for junior high groups.
- **Re-Discovering the Sacred: Spirituality in America** by Phyllis A. Tickle (Crossroad, 1995, $19.95 hardcover U.S.) examines the hunger for sacred meaning.
- **On Behalf of God: A Christian Ethic for Biology** by Bruce R. Reichenbach and V. Elving Anderson (Eerdmans, 1995, $22.99 U.S.) develops a model of Christian ethics for biological issues such as genetics, assisted reproduction, human sexuality and environmental care.

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Editorial

No more spongy Mennonites

The church—and the people in it—needs a more sophisticated view of the media. We live in a media age, and we see the media's complexity and power. Information disseminates instantly through the culture, molding public opinion and changing the course of history.

But too often our understanding of the media does not stretch past the "Evil Media" stereotypes: Rock'n'roll music has spread drugs and free sex across the land, corporate advertising has turned North Americans into insatiable consumers, video games and TV violence have our children carrying guns to school.

When did the media seize so much power? Richard Jensen has said that the first historic change to be brought about by disseminated public information came with the invention of the printing press and Martin Luther's popularizing of the Scriptures. We call that media revolution the Reformation.

> ***The church chooses its defining issues (abortion, homosexuality, partisan politics) by mimicking the themes of the media.***

More recently as well the media have changed the course of history. In the '60s and '70s, televised broadcasts of the horror of Vietnam helped bring an end to the war. Newspaper journalists Woodward and Bernstein, covering the White House, forced a criminal president out of office.

In still more recent years the media have exposed the violence of apartheid in South Africa and helped focus international pressure to bring about its end. Nationwide televising of the 1992 Rodney King beating in Los Angeles reawakened the United States (all too briefly) to the racism still with us.

This ability of the media to change history—for good and bad—imbues us with a certain awe. It is hard to understand how media with no power (no broadcast or story can force us to act) can carry so much power. The power of the media is the power people give it by believing, accepting and acting on its messages.

Some messages should be believed. The beating of Rodney King should move us to action. Some messages should not. We can choose not to buy the drink or jeans or car we are told to buy.

Fear itself: So why the fear of the media? I believe our fear grows out of our insecurity. We doubt what we believe; we doubt the strengths of our beliefs. As long as we are unclear what we stand for, we allow the media to answer the question for us.

Our uncertainty is reinforced by laziness. After a day of work, critical thinking doesn't sound like much fun. How much easier to turn on the television *and not think.* The media become an escape. Even the nightly news becomes macabre entertainment as stories rely on shock value rather than insight and critical analysis.

The church's reaction to the media is similar. Uncertain of its place in a changing society, the church looks to the media for a sign. The church chooses its defining issues (abortion, homosexuality, partisan politics) by mimicking the hot buttons of the media.

And the church goes further, using the same arguments as the media, choosing the same sides. The center of the faith, Christ, is crowded out of discussion as church quarrels sound more and more like any other public debate.

As individuals we must engage the media in discussion, not sit like a sponge, soaking in every image we are given. If we engage the media, confront the media, we can be challenged, educated, moved to action.

As a church, too, we must engage the media. We must define for ourselves what issues are most central to being the church. And we must confront the media and our culture from that clear sense of self.

Let the church be the church: not defined by the media but actively engaged, a student and prophet. *Larry Penner*

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Inside

On the road with Jesus / p. 14

Blitz-Build: faith in service / p. 16

From the outside / p. 22

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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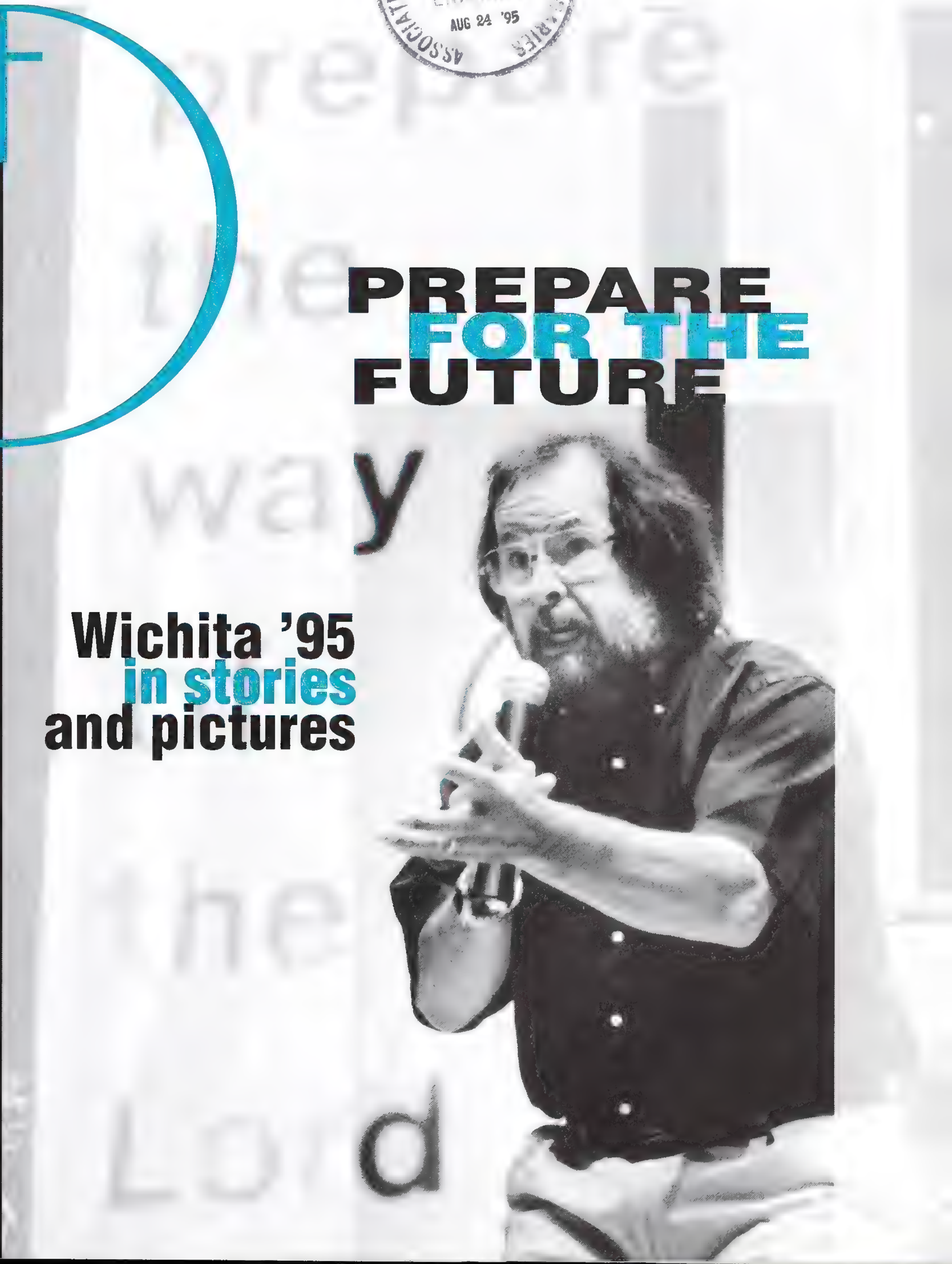
- Come together (see page 4)
- The way of the Lord (see page 8)
- God comforts, comes, rules, strengthens (see page 11)

PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

Wichita '95 in stories and pictures



Mike Yaconelli exhorts the youth and adults

Prologue

Wichita '95 is past. Many of us will carry memories from that week for quite a while: the music, the singing, the many friends we met and others we made, the speakers, the business sessions, the dramas or concerts we attended, the information and challenges we received.

Others—most of you, in fact—did not attend the conference and depend on the reports of others who were there. In this issue we offer you a glimpse, a taste of what happened that week.

The Wichita '95 convention involved the work of many people, and so did this issue. I especially thank Vada Snider for her photos. *gh*

Melanie Zuercher

Gordon and Larry at *The Mennonite*'s 110th birthday party at Wichita '95

Next issue: The power and joy of art

Cover: Photo by Vada Snider

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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Editorial offices: 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100, fax: (316) 283-0454, e-mail CompuServe 72147,2746

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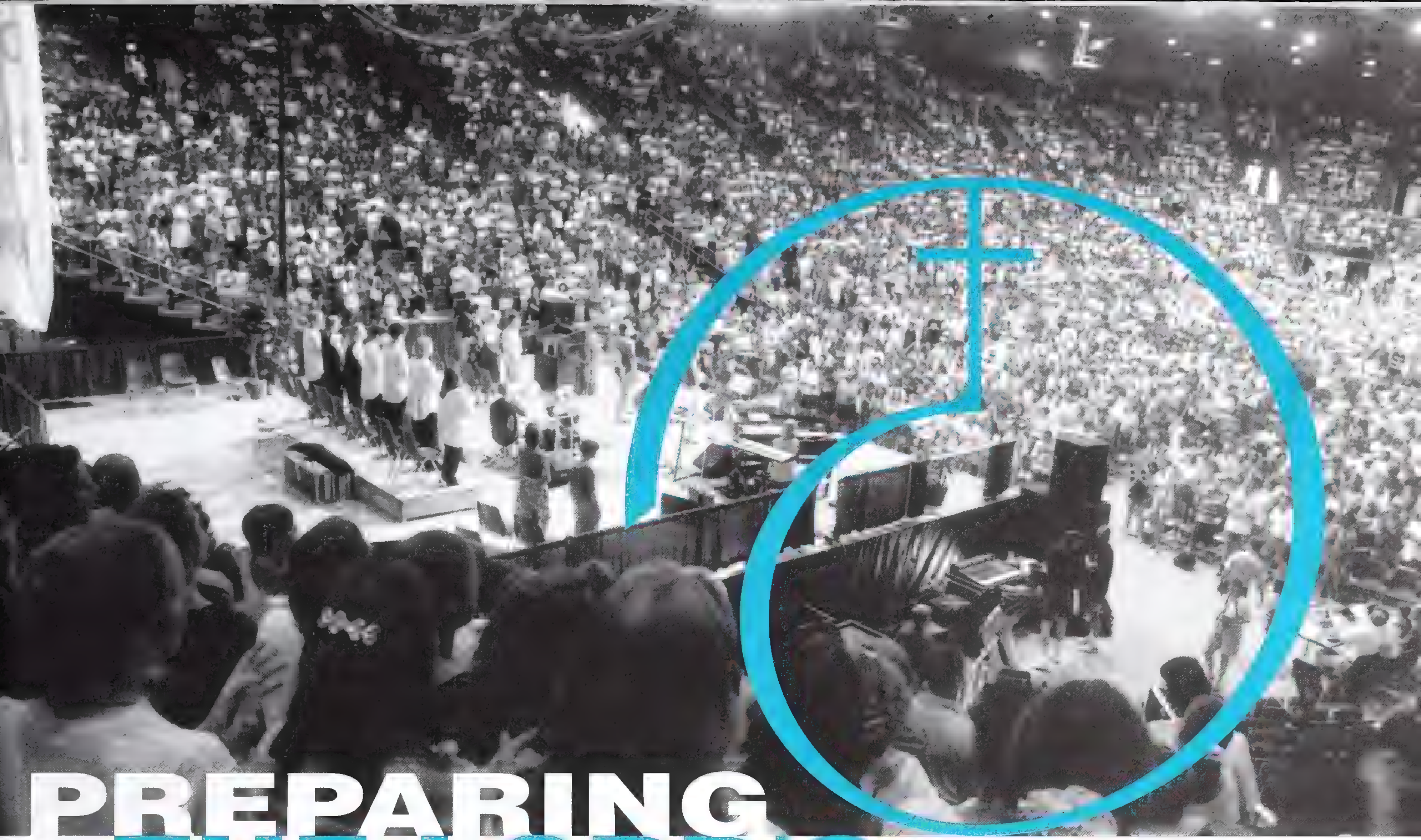

Vada Snider

PREPARING THE LORD'S WAY

Gordon Houser

The lights went out at the Kansas Coliseum, and a ram's horn blew. Tony Brown's bass voice sounded the call of John the Baptist, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

A spotlight shone on a man rollerblading down the aisle. He urged the crowd to clap along as first the ensemble and then more than 5,000 Mennonites gathered there sang with Tony. The lights came on, and children, men and women walked, skated, biked, danced and wheeled to the front. Some brought the prayer scrolls that had gone to every Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church congregation. Others waved banners or streamers, like the girl at left.

Thus began the opening worship of Wichita '95, the joint gathering of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church July 25-30 in Wichita, Kan. Read more about this event in the pages that follow.

Delegates say yes to integration.

COME TOGETHER

Larry Penner

We're on the edge of something exciting," moderator Darrell Fast said, opening the General Conference sessions at Wichita '95. Everyone knew what he was talking about.

Integration passed at Wichita, and passed handily. On the General Conference (GC) side, 93 percent of delegates voted for integration. On the Mennonite Church (MC) side, 73 percent voted yes.

But integration is not yet a reality. "What does this mean? Am I integrated or not?" asked John Schrag, North Newton, Kan., after the vote was cast. And GC general secretary Vern Preheim's first answer was, "I don't think anybody knows for sure."

The vote at Wichita laid the groundwork for later steps toward integration. By voting yes, delegates voiced a commitment to the idea of integrating the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. "We're not voting on specifics," said Doug Fast, Wichita. "We're voting on whether we think it's possible."

Delegates seem to think it's possible, but they are aware of the many hurdles that remain. "We witness to the rest of the world, but oh, do we struggle at home," said Sam Steiner of Virginia Conference (MC).

In an integration workshop, the Integration Exploration Committee summed up the main obstacles integration faces, including

- relations between binational and national (Canada/U.S.) structures,
- differences in decision-making processes between MC and GC,
- conflicts over pacing, a "difference in readiness," among members of both denominations,
- questions about how to structure overseas mission,
- concerns that minority groups will become smaller minorities in a bigger church.

These issues and more wait to be resolved.

The U.S.-Canada issue came up during the U.S. Assembly

Wichita index

- Number of meals served: 50,827
- Number of volunteers (including local people) at Blitz-Build: 4,340
- Heat index for Thursday, July 27: 108 F, 42 C
- Total offering monies: $60,852.39 U.S. ($85,700 Cdn.)
- Total pages of paper generated: 896,000
- Total buses driven simultaneously on July 27: 137
- Percent of Faith & Life Bookstore inventory sold: 56
- Registration:
  - nursery: 45
  - preschool: 76
  - primary (grades K-6): 303
  - junior youth (grades 7-9): 345
  - senior youth: 4,374
  - adults: 3,229
- Estimated total cost (including food, not housing): $1,325,000 U.S. ($1,866,000 Cdn.)

Compiled by Larry Penner

Gordon Houser

A direction is set: *GC moderator Darrell Fast (left) and MC moderator Donella Clemens exchange symbols of their respective denominations following the integration vote.*

meeting. A proposed model for the integrated church still had national and binational bodies. Many Canadians have consistently voiced opposition to a three-tiered conference (area, national and binational conferences). Erick Sawatzky, Elkhart, Ind., said, "We're still talking about Canadian congregations relating to three levels." But Robert Ramseyer, a former GC missionary, said, "I plead that we don't do anything to weaken the binational conference." During his time of mission work in Japan, he said churches there saw the binational General Conference as a testimony to the "international character of our faith."

On decision making, several GC delegates voiced concern about losing congregational say at the highest level of the conference. "Congregations need to be a vital part of setting our course as a people," said Jim Voth, Whitewater, Kan. In the current GC structure, congregations send delegates to the General Conference. In the current MC structure, delegates chosen by leadership from area conferences conduct MC business.

The "difference in readiness" surfaced in both denominations. Differences in the United States ranged from most vocal resistance in the East, to a West Coast that has already merged. In Canada readiness ranged from some strong resistance in the West, particularly the Northwest Conference of the Mennonite Church, to an East Coast that has already integrated.

Not many delegates raised concern about mission structure, but several voiced concern about the future of minority Mennonite groups.

Issue of race: The most heated criticism of integration from a minority group came out of the African-American Mennonite Association of the Mennonite Church. "We are not black sheep in the MC church, we are brothers and sisters. We do not know where we fit in dialogue with brothers and sisters on the other side," said AAMA member Stan Maclin. "If integration takes place, there is some serious education that must take place to educate our GC brothers and sisters." While the Mennonite Church has an African-American head of a mission agency (Stanley Green at Mennonite Board of Missions) and an African-American moderator-elect of the Mennonite

THE VOTE

We make a commitment to move toward the integration of our two denominations.

		YES	NO
GCMC	93%	☑	☐
MC	73%	☑	☐

"Do you realize there are Mennonites around the world who are no longer Millers, no longer Shenks? They are Mennonite through the love of Jesus Christ."

Mesach Krisetya

Church (Dwight McFadden), GCs have no African-Americans in the highest positions of conference leadership.

Concerns came as well from GC minority groups. Alberto Quintela, St. Paul, Minn., called it "unfortunate" that associate groups (including minority organizations) were inadvertently left out of the written proposal for a U.S. General Board in the integrated church. Quintela called for integration to "not invite only MCs and GCs, but invite the Chinese and the Hispanics and the African-Americans."

Willis Busenitz, who lives and works with Northern Cheyenne in Busby, Mont., called the church not to "lose sight of the churches of color. They need a voice."

Other voices of opposition questioned the necessity of a new structure. Arnold Weber of Northwest Mennonite Conference (MC) said he didn't want to "buy new machinery" and waste energy on restructuring. "If we cooperate to the point where our old structures become redundant, that would be a good thing," he said.

Eric Olfert, Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pa., said he favors smaller denominations over a larger one. "Small is creative, adaptable. I think our times require change. Larger is more stagnant, more apathetic."

A conversion story

By the end of Wichita '95, Mennonites had won the heart of Sharon Biffle, a Kansas Coliseum employee. "I can't explain it, it's just something you feel in your heart," she told me as she helped me find the nursery before Sunday morning's worship.

Sharon had had a Mennonite doctor earlier who treated her with care and sensitivity. Working at the conference, she said, she found "people who are so nice, who don't care about the way you dress."

She was moved by the peace quilts created by children that stood at the doors of the coliseum. "This week," she said, "I decided where I want to go to church." *Larry Penner*

Youth and young adults were more vocal for pushing change. And while the adult sessions were silent at the news of the yes vote out of respect for those opposed, a cheer swept through the youth conference when it received news of the yes vote.

When youth and young adults visited the microphones at the adult sessions, they consistently called their elders to vote for integration. In a young adult session, Jani VanPelt, Canby, Ore., said integration is "not a loss of the stories, of history. Let's still keep remembering where we come from. I want to be able to say this is part of my church-family history."

Integration is an unfinished process. As Al Yoder of Middlebury, Ind., said, we haven't yet "picked out the bedroom furniture."

But a direction is set. Speaking as an outsider and a teacher, Mesach Krisetya adressed delegates in worship Wednesday evening. "I am amazed how you people think about, extrapolate about integration. Do you realize there are Mennonites around the world who are no longer Millers, no longer Shenks? They are Mennonite through the love of Jesus Christ. ... If we agree that Jesus is the way, there is no obstacle to becoming one."

Dave Linscheid

Wichita '95 participants fold paper cranes at the global church celebration.

Gordon Houser

At Sunday morning's worship service, children blow up balloons to illustrate the invisible Holy Spirit.

THE WAY OF THE LORD

A variety of speakers address the conference theme.

Gordon Houser

Worship at Wichita included congregational singing accompanied by a choir and musicians, plus soloists, dramatic Scripture readings and—of course—speakers.

Renee Sauder, Kitchener, Ont., spoke opening night on "Prepare the Way of the Lord," the theme of the adult conference. She described lessons she learned while living on the Kansas prairie. "Nothing shallow grows here," she said. "Your roots have to go deep."

When God chose to initiate a new era in history, she said, it was not through the political or religious rulers nor in the chief cities of the region at that time. John the Baptist was an obscure preacher's kid living out in the wilderness. He did not know what the new thing coming was to be, only that he was to prepare the way, get things out of the way.

As the characters in *The Wizard of Oz* discovered, the gifts we seek are already within us, among us. We need only see.

God beckons us, she concluded, to become new creatures.

The next evening, Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia spoke on "Jesus Is the Way." He said that "the gospel of Jesus does not change from culture to culture, but theology does."

Is the church an institution or is it a community? he asked. If it is a community of transformed people, there will be mutual sharing and accountability.

He decried the split between transforming society and saving souls. "It is no longer enough," he said, "for people to hear the gospel of peace. They must see it making peace."

Gordon Houser

"Your roots have to go deep."

Renee Sauder

Mike Yaconelli, Yreka, Calif., spoke Thursday evening to a combined youth and adult audience on "Our Risen Savior: On the Way Together."

First, he said, "Christianity is not for superstars; it's for ordinary people." And everyone has a gift, a calling, from God. "Jesus came to say that you don't have to fit into the categories of this culture," he said. Like the disciples mentioned in Luke 24, we all are ordinary and gifted.

Second, he said, "God is not a monster to be feared." Failure is a part of life; it is good because it is how we learn. The church, he said, should be a safe place for youth to make mistakes.

Third, he asked, Where is the passion in the church today? The biggest issue he encounters when he talks with kids is guilt. "God loves you so passionately," he said, "that there's nothing you can do to make him stop loving you."

Marilyn Miller, Boulder, Colo., spoke Friday evening on "Faithfulness on the Way," from Matthew 5:13-16.

"Jesus had a God-given vision of the future that he lived in the present," she said. He focused his life on living that vision, even though it would take a long time for it to be fulfilled.

We are called salt and light, she said. In the right proportions, salt and light bring healing and hope. She described two ways to help us live the vision:

1. Start being salt and light here and now, she said. One sign of our saltiness is how we can live at peace with each other.
2. Share the "Vision: Healing and Hope" statement with your congregation, she said. One person living a vision can bring much change.

She then invited people to go to servers, who placed water on people's hands and handed out packets of salt

Gordon Houser

Salt and light: *Richard Headings (right) places water on the hand of Pat Cameron*

to take home as reminders of being salt and light.

Nzash Lumeya of Zaire spoke Saturday evening on "Jesus' Way Made Visible," from Matthew 25:31-46.

Matthew reminds us in this text, he said, that Jesus will not only judge Israel but the nations. The King rewards those who not only obey spiritually but physically, he said. Jesus did not separate the two.

He thanked Mennonite Central Committee for helping Zairians show compassion to refugees from Rwanda. "The real problem with Rwandans," he said, "was not lack of bread and water but lack of love." They needed a King who died on a cross, he said.

At Sunday morning's final worship, James Lapp spoke on "Guided by God's Love," based on Ephesians 3:16-21.

"Did we grow in love [this week in Wichita]?" he asked. No matter how smoothly things might have gone, he said, if we haven't grown in love for God and one another, it was not good.

"I'm sad that some people are afraid to talk about love and acceptance because of fear of the 'H word,' you know, homosexuality," he said. Instead, let's pursue healing and hope.

The danger we face in the '90s, he said, is exchanging knowledge about love for love. Meanwhile, violence occurs in our homes; people of color experience a qualified acceptance in our churches; our tax dollars continue to support the building of nuclear weapons.

"What greater gift can we offer others as we leave Wichita," he said, "than the message, 'You are the beloved.'"

Vada Snider

Drummers for a choir from Paris perform at the women's banquet. Women in Mission (GC) and Women's Missionary and Service Commission (MC) agreed to work toward integration of their groups.

Wichita '95 included seminars, concerts and dramas, like *Godspell* (right).

Vada Snider

March of Faith and Resistance

Vada Snider

About 60 people gathered near the Arkansas River one morning for a ritual of cleansing and blessing before marching to 10 sites in downtown Wichita. Sponsored by Christian Peacemaker Teams and the Peace and Social Justice Center of South Central Kansas, the March of Faith and Resistance stopped at sites chosen to highlight poverty, justice, homelessness, racism and other issues. Spots chosen included a farm credit bank, the county jail, a homeless shelter and the federal building.

Bible studies focus on Isaiah 40.

GOD COMFORTS, COMES, RULES, STRENGTHENS

Gordon Houser

The Bible studies during the morning worship sessions focused on Isaiah 40.

Wilma Bailey, who teaches at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., spoke first on "God Comforts," from Isaiah 40:1-5. This chapter begins the second section of the Book of Isaiah, she said, and reflects a time when Israel was living in exile in Babylon.

In contrast to the first section of Isaiah, this Second Isaiah brings a word of comfort. It is the only time in Scripture, she said, that a prophet speaks comfort.

There are times, she said, when it is inappropriate to offer comfort. For example, Jacob's sons, who had sold Joseph into slavery, told Jacob that Joseph had been killed. Their comfort, like that of an abuser toward the victim, was hypocritical. Sometimes it is proper "to weep with those who weep, to shed bitter tears."

She invited listeners to take a journey within themselves to a time when they were in a lonesome valley, as in the Negro spiritual. Next, she said, "think about what comforted you then … and what comforts you now." No matter what that means of comfort is, it is God who is comforting.

In her second study, "God Comes," from Isaiah 40:6-11, Bailey pointed out that in the ancient Near East people believed that if a nation suffered defeat it was because its god either was not powerful enough or not caring enough.

The word "but" (v. 8) marks a change from despair to salvation. The gospel declares, "Your sins are forgiven" before it says, "Rise up and walk."

"The most significant thing in Isaiah 40 is that God comes," she said. God may come mightily (v. 10) or gently (v. 11). She read conversion stories of slaves in the 19th century that showed God coming both in power and in presence. Theologian Howard Thurman reminds us, she said, that "God is seeking me."

Gordon Houser

Vision of God: *Isaiah (Ken Hawkley) proclaims comfort.*

Russian fable: God comes to us, she said, but we must look up and look out to those around us in need, much as Martin the Cobbler did in the Russian fable told by Tolstoy.

John Neufeld, president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, presented the third Bible study, "God Rules," from Isaiah 40:12-26.

The people who first heard this text, he said, had experienced a tragic loss. They questioned the relevance of their faith tradition.

Likewise, we face change. "Does the faith that was relevant in our small, close-knit communities [of the past, when we weren't as influenced by the media and the surrounding culture] still meet our needs today?" he asked.

In Isaiah 40:12-31 are 15 questions, with three strong assertions: vv. 15-17, vv. 22-24 and vv. 28-31. The basic question the people then faced was, Does God have the power to help us? Isaiah asks in turn if they have the power to be God's counselor.

The word "created" is used most often in Isaiah (10). God's power over the stars (v. 26) refers to the Babylonians' astrology worship.

Those nations that overrun peoples and destroy families are "like a drop from a bucket and are accounted as dust on the scales" (v. 15). Isaiah provides a counter confession to that of the nations: that Yahweh is Lord.

Neufeld's second talk, "God Strengthens," from Isaiah 40:27-31, focused on the way to fight fatigue and hopelessness.

In answer to the people's question, Does Yahweh care?, Isaiah calls them to a renewed vision. "God is not only in control of the big picture," Neufeld said, "but God is free to act on behalf of the people."

We can be Isaiahs to each other and to the church. Our hope, he said, "is based not on an analysis of the present but … on our vision of God."

Communion followed.

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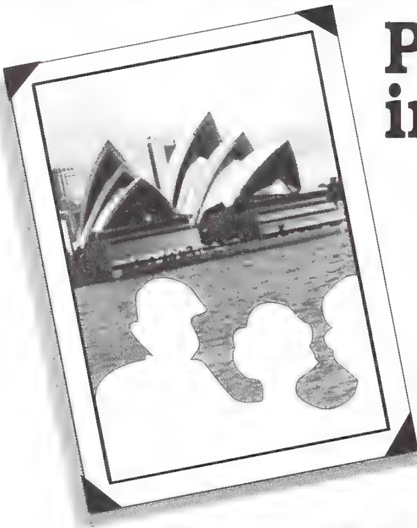

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Telephone **Gary Franz at (316) 283-5100** or write **GCMC, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church is receiving applications for an **associate pastor**. We are a 200-member urban church. The job description includes Christian education support, youth work, preaching and worship.

Respond **by Sept. 1** to **Chair of Search Committee, Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, 655 S. Lorraine, Wichita, KS 67211.**

Eastern Mennonite University director of libraries: Open summer or fall 1996. Provides leadership and coordination to planning, budgeting, organizing and staffing the Sadie Hartzler Library, including the Menno Simons Historical Library. Works closely with information systems staff. Represents library matters to the administration and serves as liaison with the library publics. Qualifications: MLS required. Second master's degree in theology or another content area highly desirable. Experience in academic administration and information systems, creative leadership, management expertise and interpersonal skills essential. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Send resume to **Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary has a faculty position in **mission and evangelism**, with some administrative responsibilities for the Summer Institute in Evangelism and Missions. Qualifications include mission/evangelism experience, Ph.D. or equivalent, teaching experience and present active membership in a Mennonite or closely related Believers' Church congregation. Position begins July 1, 1996.

Send application, resume and three references (academic, teaching and pastoral) **by Sept. 15** to **Willard M. Swartley, Dean, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.**

Letters

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ALTERNATIVES IN MEDICINE

I write this letter with reluctance because I do not mean to be critical, but I am afraid that the dedicated people who administer Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) health insurance are being misled.

P.J. Lisa's book *Assault on Medical Freedom* documents how the medical-industrial complex has systematically suppressed alternatives in medicine by labeling them "quackery" without any basis to do so. Lisa claims that the purpose of this campaign is economic—to eliminate the competition.

Only one-third of prevailing medical treatments are supported by randomized, double-blind studies, yet if such studies are not available for alternative procedures, they are rejected. A double standard is obvious. An insurance boycott is apparent.

Mennonite patients with MMA often have claims for reimbursement denied, even if the alternative therapy has succeeded and the standard therapy has previously failed. MMA would rather pay $50,000 for bypass surgery than one-tenth as much for chelation therapy. Thus a patient who chooses the safer, more natural therapy that works well for him or her has to pay for that over and above the insurance premiums.

As president-elect of the American College for Advancement in Medicine, which is widely recognized as an expert in alternatives, I asked to be allowed to present scientific evidence to the MMA board showing them how they could save thousands of dollars and serve their constituents much better by covering specific alternatives. Initially I was invited to appear, but when they checked with their medical consultant, my invitation was revoked.

It saddens me to think that both the consultant and the board have been so strongly influenced by a propaganda campaign against alternatives. This is contrary to the prevention emphasis MMA tries to promote. The health and pocketbooks of Mennonites suffer as a result. So far the board refuses even to listen to a more reasonable approach. I hope we can all pray for guidance in such controversial matters. *L. Terry Chappell, M.D., Bluffton, Ohio*

MMA RESPONDS

The letter from Dr. L. Terry Chappell raises some of the most difficult issues affecting the entire medical community. Because the issues raised are really debates within the medical community rather than among health insurers, we consulted with two highly respected Mennonite physicians to formulate a response.

First, we agree not all conventional medical treatments are as effective as claimed. The same is true for many alternative therapies.

We also agree that the generally accepted biomedical model used to determine effective medical treatment is often deficient. It does not adequately acknowledge the emotional and spiritual components of health, illness, suffering and dying. Some alternative therapies have addressed these deficiencies better than the traditional model. However, it is hard to either prove or disprove therapies based primarily on testimonial evidence or anecdotal reports. More thorough and objective study is required.

Mennonite Mutual Aid is neither equipped nor able to evaluate medical procedures and therapies. It has to depend on some broadly (though not universally) accepted standard to which other health insurers (MMA's competition) also turn for guidance. The consequences of using a broadly accepted standard will not always be fair or even just. MMA regrets this, but we are not able to sort out the legitimate from the illegitimate on our own in the broad spectrum of alternative therapies, which may range from the questionable to the bizarre.

It should be remembered that the greatest injustice in U.S. health care today is the lack of any insurance coverage for 15 percent of our citizens. If the goal of universal coverage and total pooling of risk could be achieved, the entire matter of exclusions, risk rating and other issues could be greatly alleviated.

MMA agrees with the preventive approach to health care. However, MMA must utilize some standard policy as a reference point because there is no end to the exceptions that would be claimed by some practitioners. *Howard Brenneman, president, Mennonite Mutual Aid*

DIALOGUE, NOT EXCLUSION

With thanks we wish to support the 39 signers of the "open letter to Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church conferences" (June 27 issue, page 10). They rightly report that Mennonite church statements on homosexuality call us to openness to dialogue, not exclusion, and that the Wichita '95 "Vision: Healing and Hope" calls us to "practice love, forgiveness and hospitality that affirms our diversity." Crediting God's Spirit in all who choose to believe, we too ask that efforts to expel churches that include gay and lesbian members be discontinued. *Naomi Borntrager, Merritt Gardner, Ruth Ann Gardner, Suella Gerber, Nancy S. Lapp, Steven L. Mullet, Dorothy Yoder Nyce, John Nyce, Arden Shank, Meribeth Shank; Goshen, Ind.*

FATHERS SHOULD PROTECT FAMILY

As I read "Healing the Sin in Our Midst" (May 9 issue), the Holy Spirit urged me to respond. The church wanted to bring this sinner back into the fold, which seems to reflect the present teachings of Scripture. The pastoral team claimed there are no models to follow. I disagree. Read 1 Corinthians 5:1-5.

We have many examples of incest in Leviticus 18:6-25, but not father with daughter. The father is supposed to be the protector of the family. This father abused the child he was to protect, thus sinning against God's principal creation. The family is supposed to be a safe place for children. The father not only sinned against his daughter but against God. *Abe Janzen, Coaldale, Alta.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Send letters to* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or e-mail us at CompuServe 72147,2746.*

ON THE ROAD WITH JESUS

While adults do business, youth do praise.

Larry Penner

Adults experienced the Wichita '95 youth conference as a dull thumping, shaking the exhibition hall wall during business sessions. On the other side of the wall some 4,400 youth were singing, praying and shouting to the theme "On the Road with Jesus."

Only just over 1,000 of those were from General Conference churches, and only 700 were from churches not also affiliated with the Mennonite Church. But most of the youth didn't know the difference.

"Before two months ago I didn't know there was such a thing [as two denominations]," said Darin Holsopple, Goshen, Ind. He said the first time the youth conference heard about there being two denominations at Wichita '95 was when the youth were told not to dance.

"One of the denominations didn't like dancing," said Angela Gendron, Lansdale, Pa. "Which one is that?"

For youth, Wichita '95 was about fun, praise and friends. "A lot of my friends from home I met here. I didn't know they were Mennonites until I saw them here," Darin said.

The party atmosphere was balanced by prayer groups and service work. Youth contributed most of the people power that helped build 20 new homes and repair 45 other homes for low-income people in the city. In Newton the junior high youth walked to raise over $12,000 for Mennonite Central Committee's bomb removal project in Laos.

The "True Love Waits" campaign encouraged youth to abstain from sexual intercourse. Over 1,000 youth took pledges not to have intercourse before marriage.

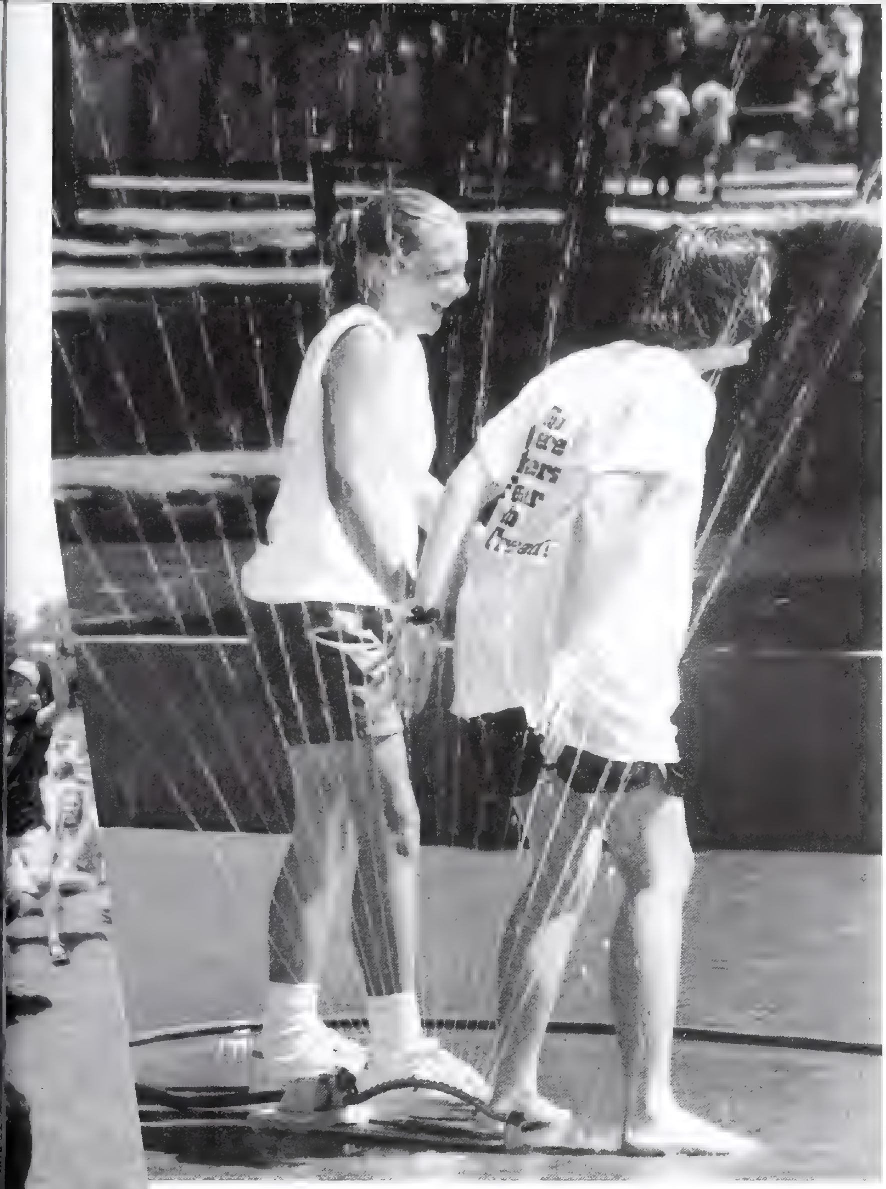
Asked if she will be coming to the adult conference in 20 years, Angela said, "Not unless they get into it more. … Mennonite churches are for older people. They need to come here and see what's going on." She was turned off by the adults at the joint youth/adult worship Thursday evening, when the adults "just sat there" while the youth screamed, clapped and cheered.

Andrew Yoder, Fort Wayne, Ind., said that as an adult, "If anything, I'd come for the youth [conference]."

And some adults agreed. Steve Good, Wayland, Iowa, said in an adult session, "Many adults [Thursday night] looked like they were frozen, terrorized by what was going on around them. … We adults need to step back and take a reality check with the youth."

Vada Snider

Fun, praise, friends: *Youth mix on the Bethel College soccer field during Road Trip '95.*



Vada Snider

Cooling off: *Two of the 345 junior youth, after walking more than three miles in 100-degree heat to raise over $12,000 to help remove bombs in Laos*

Record busters

The 1995 youth convention for the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church was the largest ever Mennonite youth conference. Some 4,400 youth and their sponsors made the conference nearly twice the size of the first joint GC/MC youth convention at Bethlehem, Pa., in 1983. A growing disparity in size between the adult convention and youth convention has introduced new issues for future conventions. Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries recently asked the Mennonite Church General Board to relocate the planned 1997 convention from Columbus, Ohio, to Orlando, Fla., to accommodate more youth. *Larry Penner*

Vada Snider

Not quite dancing: *Youth sing and praise at the coliseum Thursday night.*

BLITZ-BUILD: FAITH IN SERVICE

Over 1,300 volunteers from Wichita '95 joined over 3,000 local Wichita volunteers to build 20 homes and repair 45 for low-income people in Wichita. "Through your offerings and through your sweat, you have helped to bring good news," Tom Bishop of Mennonite Housing told conference-goers Thursday evening. An estimated 1,200 of the volunteers were Wichita '95 youth. The project was co-sponsored by the Wichita chapter of Habitat for Humanity and by Mennonite Housing of Wichita.

Pitching in: *Sam Ediger (left), Hesston, Kan., and Donavan Regehr, Andover, Kan., hammer siding at Blitz-Build.*

Vada Snider

Piece by piece: *Volunteers piece together one of the new homes erected for low-income families.*

Vada Snider

MENNONITES DISPLAY ART

Vada Snider

State of art: *Kansas artist Anna Adrian (left) explains her stitchery work to Edna Stucky. Adrian was one of 67 artists to exhibit in "Visual Arts: Wichita '95."*

General Conference delegates rolled up their sleeves for some hard work at Wichita.

DOWN TO BUSINESS

Gordon Houser

"I've lived long enough to see this [confession] as something of a miracle."
Erland Waltner

New churches, new resolutions and a new Confession of Faith came before the 942 General Conference delegates at Wichita '95. Forty-eight churches joined the General Conference Mennonite Church. Most (41) are former Mennonite Church (MC) congregations that are now part of two newly integrated bodies, the Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest conferences. This brought the total GCMC membership to 415 congregations with about 68,000 members.

Delegates passed a resolution on Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love, which lists "commitments for Mennonites in times of disagreement."

The resolution on the "Vision: Healing and Hope" statement also passed, though Clare Neufeld, Surrey, B.C., said he regretted that it does not mention loving.

Confession: Discussion of the Confession of Faith document, a project begun eight years ago, was more extensive. Helmut Harder of the Confession of Faith committee explained that members had made some changes incorporating suggestions after a draft had gone out to churches. For example, they

- replaced articles on the Sabbath and Jubilee living with one on Christian stewardship,
- retitled the "Bible" article to "Scripture," moved it, and changed the progression of thought;
- added more Old Testament references throughout;
- retitled "ministry" (Article 15) to "ministry and leadership";
- shortened many articles and almost all commentaries;
- added a two-page summary and two responsive readings (not part of the official confession).

Gary Harder, Toronto, said he hopes "it remains a confession and doesn't become a creed." It should not become a document for excluding people who may disagree with parts of it, he said.

Marg Neufeld, Winnipeg, asked if

Dave Linscheid

Speaking up: *A delegate steps to the microphone.*

"withholding forgiveness" (Article 14) is something God gives us power to do.

Erland Waltner, Elkhart, Ind., said, "I've lived long enough to see this [confession] as something of a miracle."

Dale Smith, Whitewater, Kan., said, "We're trying to talk about heavenly things in earthly language."

Jim Amstutz, Quakertown, Pa., said the confession helps us overcome our pluralism. He has found it a useful tool in catechism classes.

Bob Gerhart, Bally, Pa., said it should go back to congregations for more reflection. We should take creedal formulations more seriously than we have, he said. Later he moved that it be received as a document to be reviewed and not passed until the next GC sessions. That motion was defeated, and delegates affirmed the original resolution.

Delegates also passed a statement on violence in North America that calls the Christian church to be "a powerful witness against the use of violence to settle disputes."

These resolutions were also affirmed by Mennonite Church delegates. In separate action GC delegates approved a resolution declaring 1995 a "Jubilee year of repentance and action regarding nuclear weapons." The resolution urges Mennonites to "communicate with the U.S. Congress and the Canadian Parliament to take the lead among nations in ceasing production of nuclear weapons and in calling negotiations to reduce all nuclear stockpiles."

GC delegates also passed a resolution calling one another to support the (U.S.) Peace Tax and the (Canadian) Peace Trust campaigns, which work to provide legal alternatives to paying war taxes. This was the third consecutive GC triennial session to affirm a peace-tax resolution.

Delegates also received a statement on racism from the Hispanic Mennonite Convention (MC) and the Mennonite Association of Hispanic Churches (GC). The statement calls Mennonites to "a national ministry of peace and justice … to be a voice and a witness against hostility among races and classes." The statement calls Mennonite churches to "transform our structures … to eliminate all vestiges of racism" and to "create working partnerships between churches of all ethnicities."

Delegates also thanked Vern Preheim for his diligent work as general secretary. Preheim will resign in 1996. The Wichita conference was his last triennial session as general secretary.

Two men from the General Conference Mennonite Church of South America gave greetings. Greetings also came from Mennonite churches in Mexico.

The next GC sessions will be a shorter, two-day affair in 1997. Delegates decided the location should be determined later.

MODERATOR'S WORD

Moderator Darrell Fast opened the 47th triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church by speaking about being God's "living word."

The disagreements among us reflect the divisions in North American society, Fast said. We have let the world around us mold us into its image. We need an anchor to hold us firmly to God's Word, he said.

Fast described two camps: biblical literalists and biblical illiterates. The former camp takes the Bible seriously but exercises little discernment, while the latter camp discards anything in the Bible that does not fit a "modern, scientific perspective."

He challenged his audience to a middle way of familiarity with the Bible and discernment of its use.

Biblical literalists tend to equate truth with fact, while eliminating imagination. He called listeners to be open to new possibilities, to make the Scriptures a living word, not simply a book of rules or "facts." *Gordon Houser*

CMC LEADS THE WAY IN INTEGRATION

Gordon Houser

Before the rest of the Mennonites voted to pursue integration, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada was making it happen. Meeting in Newton, Kan., July 23-25, just prior to Wichita '95, CMC accepted into membership 69 congregations. Of these, 68 are Mennonite Church (MC) congregations in the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC) changing from associate to full membership. The other, Jubilee Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, is the first dual CMC/Mennonite Brethren congregation.

The MC congregations of MCEC decided as a conference to join CMC, though each congregation will be listed as a CMC member. When CMC chair Menno Epp of Leamington, Ont., announced the decision to accept them, the other delegates gave a standing ovation.

Integration: The CMC General Board presented a resolution supporting integration. General Secretary Helmut Harder said, "CMC is effectively an integrated conference," with both GC and MC congregations now members. "If the GC and MC agree to integrate this week, our life will become simpler. If they don't, our life will remain complicated," Harder said.

Much discussion followed during the next two days. Peter Janzen, Rosthern, Sask., affirmed the resolution, which affirmed integration. Frank Isaac, Winnipeg, however, expressed concern that we be able to retain our cultural differences.

John Lenshyn, Niverville, Man., said he is not from either Russian or Swiss ethnic background. He sees more differences within the General Conference than between GCs and MCs.

Harold Peters-Fransen, London, Ont., said that in the experience of MCEC, integration led to "an explosion of energy."

Jake Letkeman, Winnipeg, asked why we're even voting. Vice moderator Gerd Bartel said that we're at such an important crossroads that Canadians should discuss it first from the context of Canada.

Doreen Neufeld, Hamilton, Ont., said we should integrate as a witness to the world, while David Epp-Stobe, Hamilton, Ont., expressed concern about whether congregations will be able to be members of the larger church.

Ivan Unger, Cambridge, Ont., said that some people are still bitter about the process of the formation of MCEC. "Let's not push it."

John Friesen, Winnipeg, said that if integration passes, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary would not need to consume as much institutional energy for its work.

Herb Schultz, Baden, Ont., said that after accepting the 68 MC congregations the previous evening, what would it mean if many people voted against integration? We should take the risk and take this step.

A delegate asked for a ballot vote, and the resolution for integration passed 637 to 16, a majority of 97.5 percent.

Budget: Jona Leppky, chair of the finance commission, said that a shortfall of 13.9 percent in income in 1994 forces CMC to set priorities for how to use the funds available. Because budget receipts have not increased in five years, the finance commission recommended adopting a flat budget for the next several years.

Delegates later passed a 1996 income budget of $4,557,000 and an expense budget of $4,674,000, a deficit of $117,000. This was an increase of less than 1 percent over the 1995 budget.

Because of a drop in congregational giving to CMC, the General Board plans to visit every CMC congregation for "A Time for Listening," to hear people's concerns.

A publications steering committee is

A musical tradition: *Wendy Janzen and Ingrid Cornies sing with a troupe of 24 CMC delegates. The troupe presented "Singing Pilgrims," reviewing 450 years of Mennonite singing.*

Aiden Schlichting Enns

working with *Mennonite Reporter* to develop a new communications piece that would reach more CMC members. In the next year the committee will collect information from constituents about what they want in a publication.

Ivan Unger said he is an avid reader of church papers and doesn't like the idea of CMC doing on a more local level what *The Mennonite* and *Gospel Herald* do, unless *Mennonite Reporter* closes shop.

Edgar Rempel, Winnipeg, said that CMC needs to control its own editorial content, while David Janzen, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., said that thinking a paper will be read by all church members across Canada is a pipe dream.

Sam Steiner, chair of Mennonite Publishing Services, which publishes *Mennonite Reporter*, said that that paper is at a crossroads and may need to recreate itself in order to reach more people.

From 1990 to 1994 CMC had 919 fewer members and six fewer congregations, reported Tym Elias, who works part-time for the ministries commission in evangelism and church development.

CMC chair Menno Epp addressed the conference on "God's Workmanship." "While good works are inadequate for our salvation," he said, "they are our thanksgiving to God." To be a family—or a building—of churches is not merely a structural reality but a spiritual reality, he said. "The gift of salvation translates into the gift of association."

Other business: Delegates also passed a resolution to look at the biblical message regarding poverty and how the church should respond. Another resolution returned greetings to Mennonites in the former Soviet Union.

In a time for miscellaneous concerns, Ron Sawatsky, Waterloo, Ont., said we need to broaden our language and talk about other traditions besides Russian and Swiss. There are also French, Hispanic, Chinese, Laotian, Hmong, Vietnamese churches.

Randy Klassen, Altona, Man., recommended that we not just pass "motherhood" resolutions like the one on poverty. Such resolutions need to have more teeth, to be tied more to our budget, for example.

David Chiu, Abbotsford, B.C., said he appreciated the inclusive statements about Chinese Canadians and others, but "we should not neglect inviting [into our churches] Caucasian Canadians" who are not Russian or Swiss.

Participants at this year's CMC sessions included 269 delegates representing 116 congregations, 76 visitors and 20 children. Next year's CMC sessions will be held July 3-7 in Calgary.

BIBLE STUDY: MYSTERY AND VOCATION

Jack and Irene Suderman of Kitchener, Ont., who have served as mission workers in Colombia, led two Bible studies of Ephesians, addressing the conference's theme, "Joined Together in Christ."

The first study focused on "A Mystery Revealed." While our world is getting smaller, Jack said, "so is our thinking about the world."

"That this letter uses gender unity as one of the four examples of unity in Christ has tremendous implications for us and our churches," Irene said.

They pointed out four examples of unity from Ephesians: (1) Jews and Gentiles, (2) men and women, (3) slaves and masters, (4) parents and children.

"The vocation of the church is to live this mystery [of unity in Christ]," said Jack. But many things divide us. For example, he said, "This letter suggests that the written Scriptures [the Old Testament] had become a wall of separation. We are hermeneutically divided; we have let our interpretations of the Scripture divide us."

The Sudermans' second Bible study, "A Vocation Defined," focused on unity. "The unity called for in Ephesians is ... the unity of a faithful community."

Some reformers are like a riverbed that directs the flow of the community, says a Latin American writer. Other reformers are like beavers who build dams that block the flow of water.

A Colombian friend said, "You can always tell the difference between a wise person and a person who knows a lot." The latter is like one who carries a torch to light the path for others, he said, while "a wise person is one who is a torch."

Ephesians calls Christians to join the battle against injustice, Jack said, and to wear "the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:11).

They applied this battle imagery to Colombia:

- The Colombian military fears nothing more than truth.
- The Colombian drug lords fear nothing more than justice.
- The Colombian government fears nothing more than peace built upon justice.
- The Colombian guerrillas fear nothing more than perseverance.

"The community that takes seriously the call of the revealed mystery," they said, "will be a community of the cross, a community in chains," as was the apostle Paul. *Gordon Houser*

A Mennonite Brethren editor shares his take on Wichita '95.

FROM THE OUTSIDE

Don Ratzlaff

I was sitting in the General Conference Mennonite Church business meeting when "The Vote" was announced. What I'll remember most is the eerie silence that followed. Having just shuttled over from the Mennonite Church sessions, I had missed leadership's request that, in deference to members who had voted otherwise, no audible response be made.

In that silence, though, I had the chance to gauge my own response as an "outsider," a nonintegrated Mennonite Brethren. I wonder if I don't share some of the same mixed feelings many of you do about integration, though perhaps for different reasons.

I felt the joy of unity. Combining the two largest Mennonite bodies in North America is no small accomplishment. It affirms the visionary efforts of many women and men among you, but more so the power of the Holy Spirit. Your action is a witness both to the world and to the broader Anabaptist-Mennonite family: Christ desires unity; he is a reconciler of people.

I felt the pain of loss. Life together will be different from what it was apart. Much will be gained, but some good things will be lost. Our merger with the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren in 1960, according to one historian, was a case of one group swallowing another. In the process of becoming one, elements of the body felt disempowered, vision and commitment waned. Learn from us. Minimize the loss. Continue to value each other, even your differences and quirks.

I felt uncertainty about the future. Your integration prods the rest of us to realize the similarities we share with you, and to ask whether our differences can justify segmentation. Some of us would say they cannot. Others of us would disagree.

Sometimes I can almost envision one united Mennonite fellowship. But as I scan the ecclesiastical horizon, I see Mennonites moving toward two broad alliances based on theological emphases: community/justice on the one hand, piety/evangelism on the other. What's more, the polarization is happening as much within our respective groups as between them. Unless the Spirit moves us beyond our biases to see that a relevant Anabaptism must continue to value both, we won't come together.

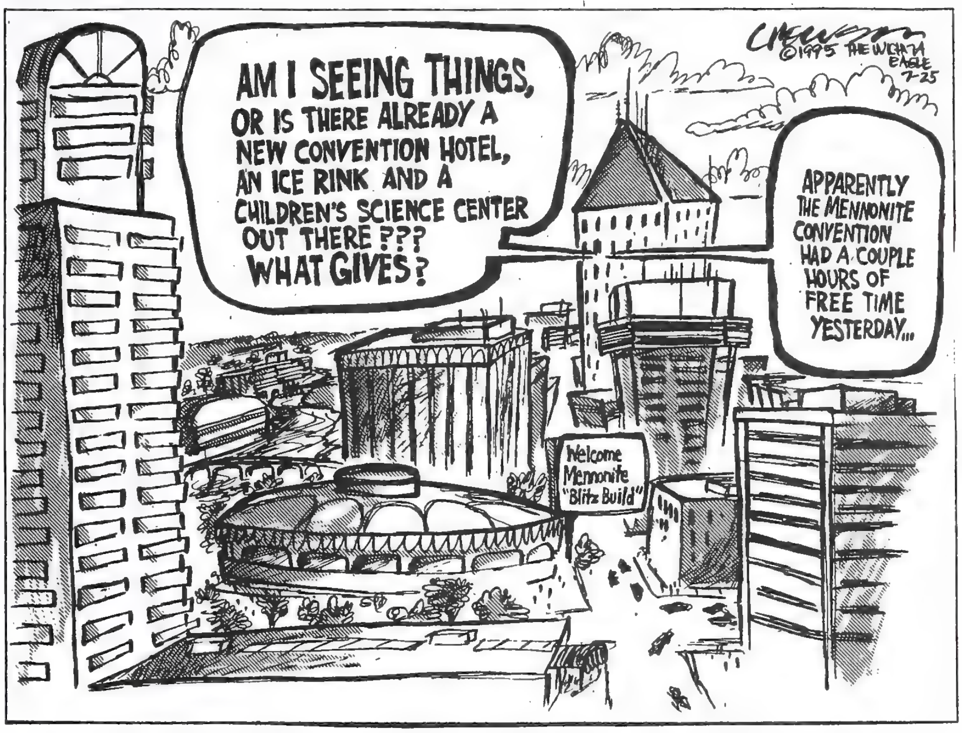
Only God knows what lies in store for the broader Mennonite family in the light of integration. All of us are in for adjustments. One Wichita '95 participant who knew of my linkage asked me what effect the merger of the two largest North American bodies will have on "Number 3," the Mennonite Brethren. For one thing, I responded with orneriness, Mennonite Brethren will have to get used to the idea that we are no longer the Mennonite body with the largest worldwide membership.

I say that only to say this: Statistical posturing aside, we are all entering a new day. It calls for increasing cooperation and unity among believers, it must move us beyond national borders to embrace a global church.

You folks have taken a large step into that new day. But please know the rest of us are walking there too—serving, ministering, building, bridging as we sense God leading us. Someday our churches may indeed walk as one. If so, it will be because we have faithfully followed the footsteps of Christ.

Don Ratzlaff is editor of The Christian Leader, *a U.S. Mennonite Brethren magazine. This is a Meetinghouse article.*

CROWSON'S VIEW


AM I SEEING THINGS, OR IS THERE ALREADY A NEW CONVENTION HOTEL, AN ICE RINK AND A CHILDREN'S SCIENCE CENTER OUT THERE ??? WHAT GIVES?
APPARENTLY THE MENNONITE CONVENTION HAD A COUPLE HOURS OF FREE TIME YESTERDAY...
Welcome Mennonite "Blitz Build"
CROWSON ©1995 THE WICHITA EAGLE 7-25

Richard Crowson is editorial cartoonist at The Wichita Eagle. *Reprinted with permission from* The Wichita Eagle.

ALL GOOD THINGS MUST END

Wichita '95 came to a close Sunday, July 30. Bags were packed, good-byes said. The previous week had set a direction for the church—a direction of integration. Over the next months and years a new church will emerge. May God's Spirit lead us into a new creation.

Vada Snider

Closing time: *Tom Harder walks out of Exhibition Hall after leading Mennonites in song.*

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Editorial

On the way, not in the way

One message from the Wichita '95 conference (featured in this issue) is that our institutions should not get in our way but rather help us follow the way of the Lord. As we consider how we organize ourselves, we should keep asking, Does this structure help us live in obedience to God? Or, to paraphrase Jim Lapp in his sermon at the final worship service, Do our institutions help us grow in love?

The theme of this conference—"Prepare the Way of the Lord"—is taken from Matthew 3:3, where John the Baptist is quoting Isaiah 40:3. These words—both in Isaiah's time and in John the Baptist's time—were spoken to people living under the rule of a government hostile to God's way.

More than once a delegate or a speaker pointed out our tendency to mimic rather than stand against the broader society we live in. Steve Ratzlaff of Lincoln, Neb., addressing the issue of integration between the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, said that we are "products of the society we live in" if we look at issues in terms of what's in it for us. Instead, he said, "we need to be asking how we can be faithful in building the kingdom of God."

> *Ahead of us lies the task of forming and reforming our institutions into channels of healing and hope.*

Bible teacher John Neufeld of Winnipeg asked if "the faith that was relevant in our close-knit communities" of the past, when we weren't as influenced by the media and the surrounding culture, is still relevant today.

John the Baptist's message came "in the wilderness," which may seem foreign to us. However, as some of the guests at the Wichita conference from overseas reminded us, we live in a wilderness of illusion. We may feel comfortable, secure, confident in our faith. But we live in a land of "wealth and busyness" and may be keeping God's Spirit at bay, according to these Mennonite leaders from Brazil, France, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia and Zaire.

Our institutions should help us reflect on our place in society and call us forward to greater faithfulness. In many ways, Wichita '95 did that. For example, delegates passed a vision statement that calls us "to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."

Holy joy: In a stirring and humorous message, Mike Yaconelli, Yreka, Calif., spoke not only of grace but of God's passionate love for us. The opening night's worship service showed that Mennonites know how to express holy joy, as we sang and clapped while some danced, skated and biked around the floor of the Kansas Coliseum. And delegates not only passed statements about making peace, but many demonstrated that peace by helping build 20 new homes for low-income people in Wichita.

Sharing God's healing and hope with the world is new for many Mennonites. We are great at getting our hands dirty doing service, but we tend to refrain from tying that service with God's message of hope to the world in Jesus Christ. But I saw that happening at Wichita, and it was our institutions that helped make the witness and the encouragement and inspiration of that week possible.

I experienced a number of benefits of the organization that made Wichita '95 possible: enjoyment of the singing and music, the aesthetic pleasure of the dramas and the art exhibit, meeting old friends and making new ones, the challenge of God's Word from various speakers, plus the satisfaction of hearing about my son's good experience in the junior youth program. I thank God for how we've organized to make such conferences possible.

Ahead of us lies the task of forming and reforming our institutions into channels of healing and hope. Integration of two church structures that few people understand and that our youth see as either inscrutable or antiquated is one step in making our organization more relevant and less divisive. But the task is ongoing; it is never finished.

The real work, and the life of our churches, is not in those institutions. But they can help us and our congregations follow the way of the Lord in the wilderness of North America. *Gordon Houser*

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Sculpting joy out of sorrow / p. 13

Do pastors pray? / p. 14

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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The joy and power of art

- The wall (see page 3)
- Art on our church walls (see page 6)
- Mennonite artists: creating a sense of place (see page 8)

Prologue

We cannot live without art. Think about it—no songs, no stories, no art museums, no plays, no children's drawings happily brought home for Mom and Dad to put on the refrigerator.

God is the Supreme Artist and created us to be creative, to enjoy and participate in artistic acts, no matter what skill level we may possess.

In this issue we look at the potential of art to communicate in a powerful way the beauty of God's creation, the joy of God's Spirit and the pain of the world that God wants to heal.

In Seattle (page 3) and Lancaster, Pa. (page 6), Mennonite artists have introduced art to the walls of church sanctuaries.

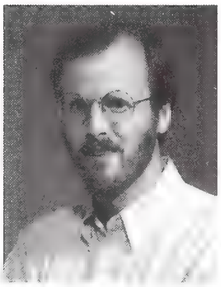
Billie Jean Wiebe and Doug Liechty Caskey report some of the results of a survey they conducted of Mennonite artists in North America (page 8). They conclude that these artists are looking for ways to connect their calling to the church.

With her typical use of graphic detail, poet Jean Janzen helps us feel the artistic impulse (page 11).

Sculptor Margaret Metzler Hudson (page 13) has created beauty out of painful experiences.

And columnist Marlene Kropf (page 14) shows us ways to help our pastors in their prayer lives.

With school and Sunday school beginning anew, let us be in prayer for our children's learning. *gh*



Next issue: Mennonites in Russia

Cover: Photo by Oscar C. Williams

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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General
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Church

Four Mennonite artists use images and words to confront their congregation with the message of Lent.

The Wall

Gordon Houser with Carla Reimer and Stan and Sandy Richardson

The scene shocked many of the Seattle Mennonite Church members that first Sunday in Lent. One woman said, "Who hates us this much?" The word "hypocrites" had been spray-painted in large letters across one wall in the sanctuary.

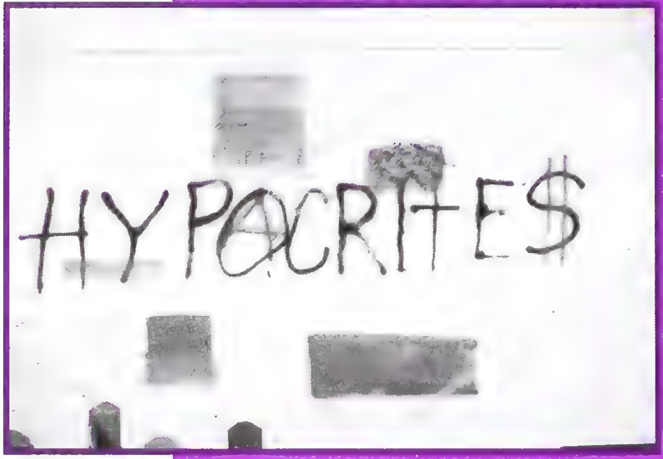
Later these church members learned that other members of their church—artists Sandy Zeiset Richardson, Stan Richardson, and Lisa and Michael Bade—had painted this word across the wall. In fact, they had painted it twice, each time at night.

After the first job a church member who had not been told about the project discovered the painted word. He filed a police report and painted over it. The artists came back the next night and redid their job, this time letting him know what they were doing.

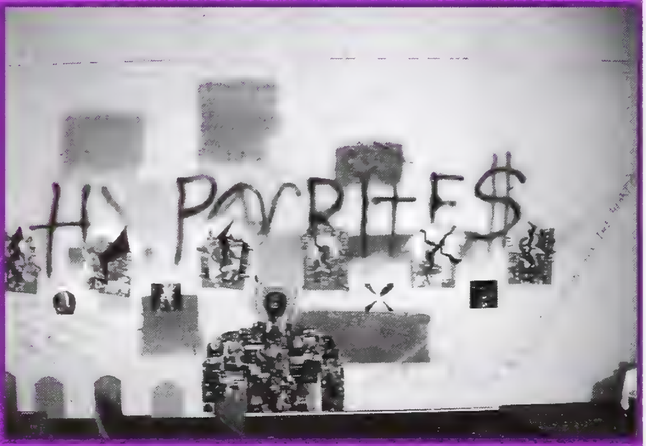
The joy and power of art

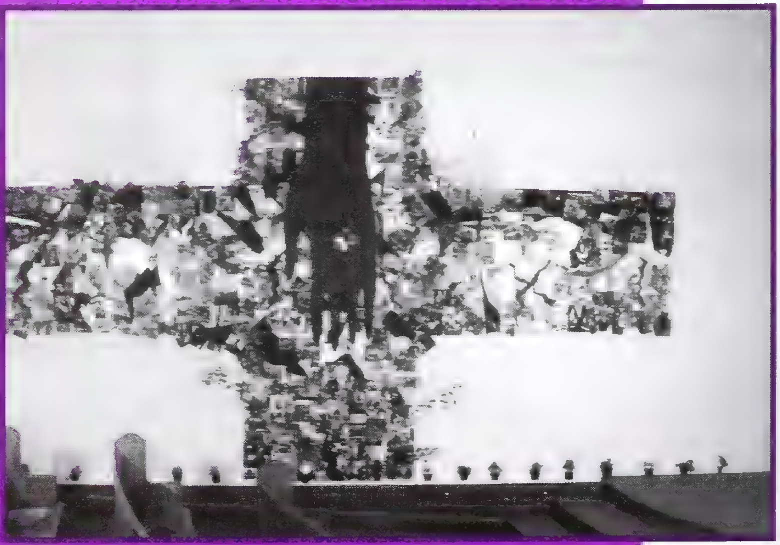
"The collage gave us courage or foolishness, depending on how you look at it."

Sandy Zeiset Richardson



HYPOCRITES





The joy and power of art

Human violence: On each of the following Sundays in Lent, church members found new words and images on the wall, including magazine photos of human violence and environmental degradation. For example, "People of Iraq died for your sins." "Mennonites abuse children at the same rate as the national average." "Jesus Christ died of AIDS."

"The collage gave us courage or foolishness, depending on how you look at it," says Sandy. "People would come to church curious. Kids would meet their friends at the collage to talk about it."

As the Sundays rolled by, the images and words formed a cross. For Good Friday the artists placed barbed wire secured by railroad spikes across the cross and scattered seeds. On Easter Sunday they cut the barbed wire, replaced the seeds with plants, added ivy to the cross and wrote this quote from William James on the wall around the cross:

> "I am done with great things and big things and great institutions and big successes, and I am for those tiny, invisible, molecular forces that work from individual to individual, creeping through the crannies of this world … which if you give them time, will bend the hardest monuments of humanity's pride."

The artists say they had thought about the meaning of Lent. They wanted to start with something ugly, confrontive, chaotic, and move toward something meaningful and redemptive. They say the project proved more exhausting than they had anticipated, yet it took on a life of its own and swept them along.

'Shocking':

comments about the wall

"The wall made Lent special. Each of the six weeks we anticipated what would happen next. It kept getting worse and worse, more violence and filth. How would they turn it around? What would happen on Easter? Would they take everything off and make it white again? Then Easter came with little bits of green, subtle green growing in the cross. Easter doesn't offer simple solutions like whitewashing, covering over the evil and filth, but is green, growing, infiltrating. Easter doesn't change the world, it changes us, then we are to infiltrate the world." *Janet Berg*

"For me the wall was about the construction and deconstruction of modern society and the fact that we are a part of it whether we like to believe that or not." *Elizabeth Alexander*

"Part of the power of the wall was that it was visual not verbal. I had a toddler at the time and couldn't concentrate on the sermon because I was chasing him around. Still, I left each Sunday of Lent with something to ponder. The effect lasted long after Easter. After three years I couldn't tell you about any sermon I've heard, but I still have vivid impressions of the wall and how it felt to face it every week." *Pat Shaver*

art on our church walls

Marlisa Yoder-Bontrager involves her congregation in the creation of art that enhances worship.

Phyllis Pellman Good

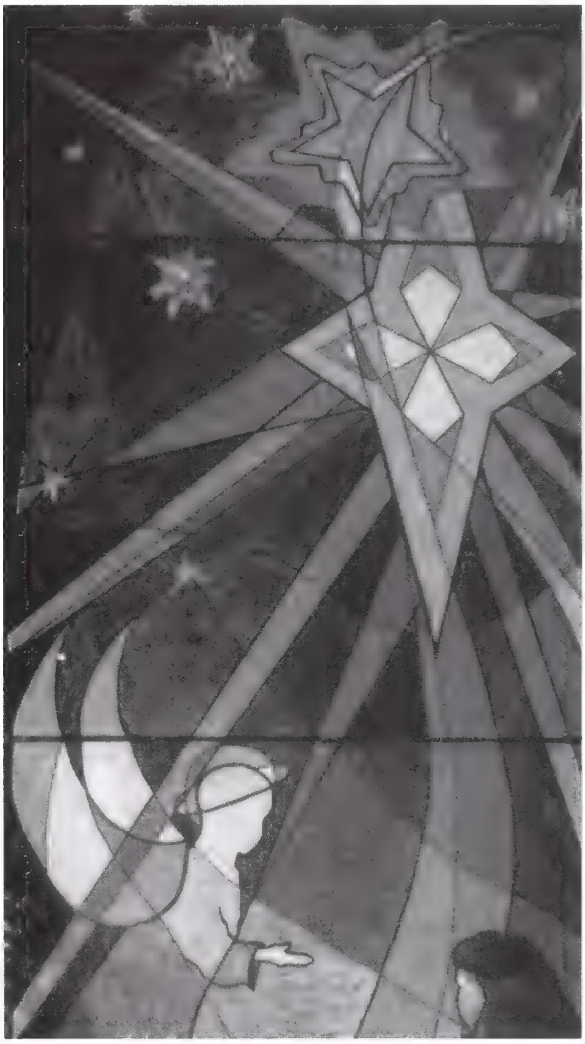
Is there any place for art in Mennonite church buildings? Art, that is, that's been created by the congregation's members.

Marlisa Yoder-Bontrager believes congregational life can be enlarged and enhanced by inviting members to make or assemble visual art pieces for the buildings in which they gather and worship. She speaks from experience.

"People need a lot of encouragement to find their creative parts," she says. "It's a problem that goes back to first grade. School educates creativity and imagination out of people. We're told there are right ways to do things." Despite that stark assessment, she has managed to inspire others in her fellowship.

Marlisa's work at the East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa., has included creating a long-armed mobile that swayed delicately through a 20-foot square of airspace over the congregation. Balanced in flight from the mobile's arms were dozens of paper cranes, folded into shape by the congregation's children.

Stained glass window: At Christmas she designed a 15-foot long paper banner, drawn to look like a stained glass window and made to hang behind the pulpit area. Marlisa and Daryl, her husband, and their two elementary-aged children colored the entire stretch of paper on their living room floor. Hung at an angle from the wall so that it was partly lit from behind, the banner brought celebration to the gathered congregation as well as powerful proof that visual creativity lies not only in the hands of an elite few.



Not for an elite few: *the Christmas banner*

Remembering her family's aching arms and calloused fingers, Marlisa took her next paper banner to the visual arts Sunday school class she was leading. Youth group members, young parents and junior high kids worked elbow to elbow with crayons, covering every patch of the paper to create a translucent banner that hung from floor to ceiling at Easter time. It, too, in its spirit and making, belonged to the congregation.

Without Marlisa's passion, the projects, as well as the full involvement of so many people, would likely not have happened. The Yoder-Bontragers are currently living in Honduras on a Mennonite Central Committee assignment, and the congregation has not replaced her leadership. "It's really hard work, but I'm driven by it," Marlisa says. "The crane idea had been around for a long time, and I just couldn't put it to rest."

In the congregation she is as eager to include others in creating visually as she is to express her own artistic vision. "I remember when I found the phrase, 'worship center.' It was a feeling I had, and then I found the words. It's a collection of things around a theme—Back-to-School Sunday, Music Sunday, Labor Day. Members bring objects symbolic of what they do or imagine, and arrange them. I like the idea because people who don't think they are artistic can be part of it.

> ***"Maybe the church can lead the way, tapping people who feel comfortable doing these sorts of things and calling it out of others."***
>
> **Marlisa Yoder-Bontrager**

Even if they can't draw, they can select objects and position them."

Marlisa tries to satisfy her own artistic standards while still accommodating the interests and varying abilities of the other members in the church. "I try to stay away from traditional images. Or I push myself to go a step further. That's a discipline in itself.

"If I'm stuck, I talk to Daryl. Often I come up with an idea; then I talk to him, and he'll add another dimension or layer that enriches it. He's also the technical person. He's faster with the saw and stapler. And he didn't know he had all that within him before this."

While the church has often been seen as the squelcher of creativity, particularly the visual arts among Mennonites, Marlisa sees another possible track. "Maybe the church can lead the way, tapping people who feel comfortable doing these sorts of things and calling it out of others."

But modern Mennonite meetinghouses present a new dilemma, according to Marlisa. "The problem is our 'well-modulated' churches. Everything is so coordinated that people don't feel 'called' to work in the spaces. They are too 'perfect.' I mean, would you have the nerve to put something in a mauve and blue hallway that might be orange and green? I am so grateful our church has lots of blank white walls. They invite people to put something there."

Phyllis Pellman Good is editor of Festival Quarterly. *This article from its Winter 1995 issue is reprinted with permission from* Festival Quarterly, *3513 Old Philadelphia Pike, Intercourse, PA 17534.*

That far-off call

Rachel Goertz Ratzlaff, as told to Suzanne Lawrence

I was nice in church. I didn't generally play,
not even with a handkerchief.
But one evening, the Bethel College choir
came to sing, and they sang beautifully.
The girls had ivory-cream colored,
pleated shirt-dresses, long sleeves,
sort of sweater effect.
They sang this song—
I don't know if I ever heard it again—
something about a boat
wa-a-a-ay off in the distance.
One in the back row—
and I never could figure out which one—
was singing that far-off "Call, Call."
In the front row, the girls would sing the answer.
I scooted up and down
the back of the next pew
so that I could see
who was making that "Call"—
it sounded so far away.

Afterwards, while people were socializing,
one of the college girls began coming toward me.
I went behind the Round Oak stove.
When she started around one side
I scooted around to the other.

Well, I didn't know her.
Why did she want to talk to me?

Reprinted from Mennonite Life, *March 1995.*

Mennonite artists:
creating a sense of place

A questionnaire reveals the feelings of Mennonite artists.

Billie Jean Wiebe and Doug Liechty Caskey

Through history the Mennonite community has limited and even condemned the arts. What about today? Do Mennonite artists feel accepted and encouraged by their communities of faith? What difficulties do they face in integrating their creativity and faith with their community?

We sought to answer these and other questions by asking Mennonites currently working in the arts to offer their perceptions of life as a Mennonite artist. We sent 358 questionnaires to members of the Association for Mennonites in the Arts (AMITA). Of these, 149 were completed and returned, for a response rate of 41.6 percent.

The makeup of the respondents roughly followed Mennonite demographics: slightly more females than males, mostly from the Midwestern United States (Indiana, Kansas, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Illinois) and Ontario. The arts most represented in the study included vocal music, instrumental music, visual art, theater/drama and poetry. Sixty of the respondents (40.3 percent) are arts educators, while 40 (26.8 percent) more make their living primarily as artists. The respondents are overall a highly educated group with 137 (91.9 percent) having earned a four-year college degree or higher, with a vast majority (123, or 82.6 percent) having attended at least one Mennonite secondary or post-secondary educational institution.

The joy and power of art

In his essay "Traditions and Transitions: Amish and Mennonite Expression in Visual Art," Stanley A. Kaufman writes, "Simply ignoring its artists and their potential value to the community has been the Mennonite church's most effective way of denying them a place in the community." Numerous artists in our study echo Kaufman's sentiment.

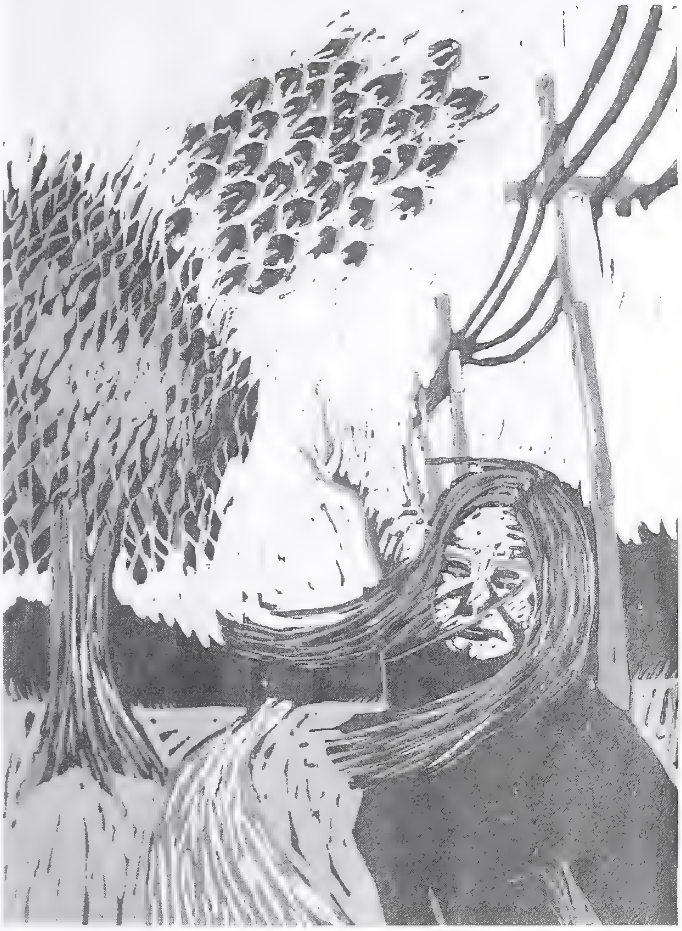
Spiritual overtones: Many artists experience a lack of full acceptance and/or understanding by Mennonites. One instrumental musician observed that "Mennonite churchgoers have limited notions of the appropriateness of artistic expression to church services and functions, and little notion of how artistic expression can have spiritual overtones for artists and those who appreciate the arts. Mennonite artists form a beleaguered and straggling subset of Mennonite membership; their impact on the Mennonite church in general is limited by an insistence that the artistic expression should have some overtly religious end."

Others noted that unless their art serves some secondary, practical purpose, it remains largely unappreciated. "Traditional functioning art is most valued, [but] it is still viewed as 'nice,' not as central to interpreting our story and who we are." Many artists recognized that traditional church music has become firmly established as an acceptable form of artistic expression in the minds of many, but this is only a start toward a more full-fledged acceptance of the arts. One vocal instructor wrote, "I am discouraged that the Mennonite community does not more wholeheartedly embrace the arts. To exclude the visual arts, dramatic arts, and many musical expressions as many churches … do is to limit the experience of God for many people … not to mention giving artists the feeling of being excluded."

Yet the artists of our study clearly want to remain in the Mennonite community. Many said their Christian faith and their artistic endeavors are essentially inseparable, that the artistic impulse to create brings them closer to the Creator and to what it means to be both Christian and artist.

Peace tradition: For some artists, certain Mennonite themes are reflected in their choice of subject matter. A songwriter said, "I grew up in the

> ***"To exclude the visual arts, dramatic arts, and many musical expressions as many churches ... do is to limit the experience of God for many people."***



Timothy R. Dyck of Plainsboro, N.J., writes this about his woodcut: "*See Look* is a piece about visual stimulation. Barb and I walk every morning; sometimes the wind, trees and birds all seem to be a part of one motion."

Church of the Brethren and became a Mennonite at age 21. Both churches are from a peace tradition as well as believing strongly in justice. These values are woven into many of the songs I write." One dramatist was surprised to find traditional Mennonite themes of peacemaking evident throughout his previous artistic choices without a conscious intent to work with these themes.

A visual artist who explores both the living and dying cycles in God's world said, "Frequently the subject matter in my work is motivated by my religious experience. My interests in biology and growing things are incorporated in my work." Another artist working in music and video said, "My art values people and peace. It attempts to speak on issues like sexual abuse, racism, capital punishment, militarism. These aren't just abstract but are influenced by faith."

This is not to imply that working with traditional Mennonite themes such as peace and justice is what defines an artist as Mennonite. Indeed, many artists indicated that it was not so much the content of their work that might make them distinctive but the way they approach their work or conduct themselves in the artistic community. For example, a "Mennonite work ethic" was often cited as an influence on the artist's creative process, and a number of respondents expressed the desire to be honest in their artistic expression and relationships.

Mennonite orientation: One visual artist said, "I do not find it difficult to relate to exhibits or competitions with my Mennonite orientation. If the exhibit is sponsored by 'beer' I may choose not to participate. My peace orientation provides opportunity for witness."

Simple respect and frugality underlie this artist's effort: "To strive for quality without extravagance. To respect other artists. To not take advantage of them." A photographer wrote, "Being Mennonite has been helpful in applying principles of reliability, productivity and truthfulness to my photography."

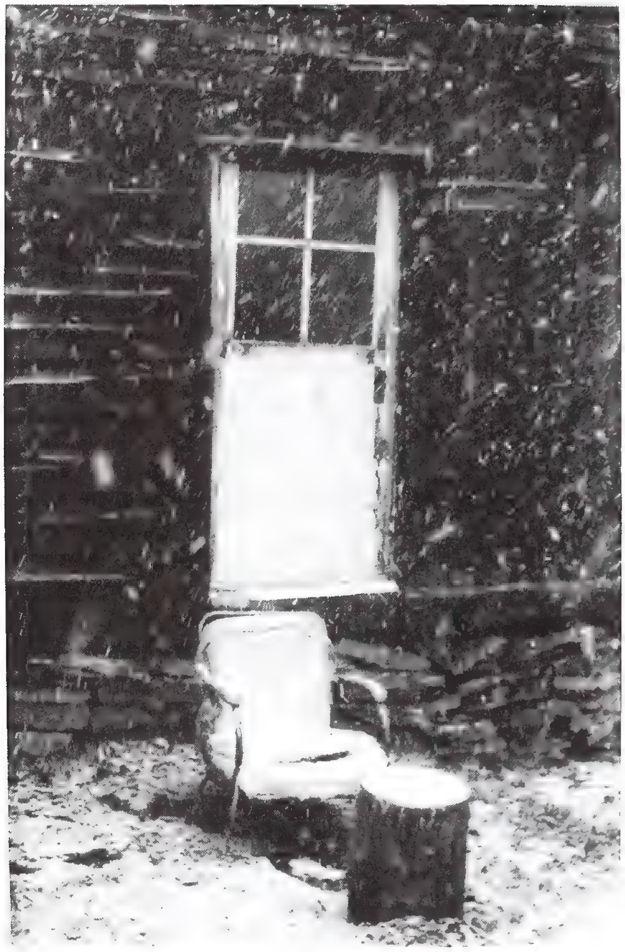
The thematic choices or an honest work ethic may characterize some Mennonite artists, but more often than not the artists in this study explained that simply engaging in their work was a spiritual experience. One writer said, "Poetry and the essay form have been a way for me to explore the inner life and the spiritual dimension in the commonplace events of my life."

The call to be an artist in the Mennonite community has practical and transcendental implications. A storyteller and dancer wrote, "It is clear to me ... because of the definite spiritual role in the discovery, that my work has everything to do with God's desire for my energy and life and what I can give to others by being faithful to the 'call.'" A poet reiterates the spiritual nature of an artist's work: "My spirituality is such a part of me that there would be no way it wouldn't be expressed in some way in my work. It's the essence of who I am and how I see the world." A painter and musician summarizes her personal and spiritual relationships with God thus: "God is Creator. God is source of creativity. I do not create alone, and when I am creating I feel the closest to God."

When asked about the status of the arts in the North American Mennonite community, over and over again the artists in our study felt heartened by the sense that the arts have begun to move toward a more accepted place. Yet they still believe more progress is needed if we are to provide our artists with a strong sense of place in the Mennonite community.

A painter wrote, "My faith is tied up in my artistic journey. For a while, I perceived my art as negative in regard to my faith experience, but lately I've come to see it as integral to my self-expression [and] spiritual journey. I see my art as a service to others—something I can offer to enrich my life and the lives of others."

Billie Jean Wiebe and Doug Liechty Caskey are professors in English, communication and drama at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College. The artwork is from Visual Arts Wichita '95, *an exhibition of works of art at the joint conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church in Wichita, Kan., July 25-30.*



Gordon L. Groff of Zionhill, Pa., writes this about *Gone*, his black and white photograph: "The weather forecast was calling for snow the morning we left to go grouse hunting in Rush, Pa. Sure enough, at lunch time it started snowing, the first for the year and with the empty chair still sitting outside; it felt like summer was 'gone.'"

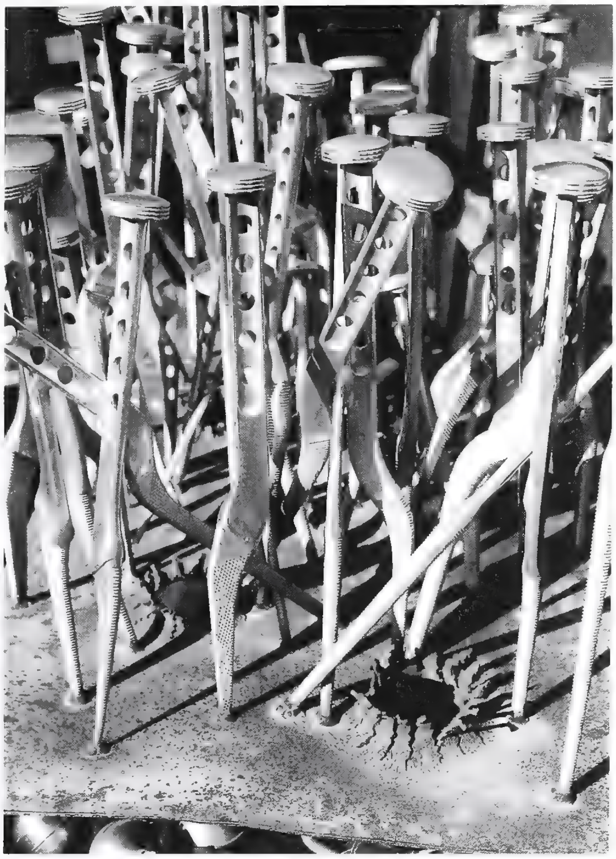
Stats from Mennonite artists survey

Age of respondents

1-19 years	0	(0%)
20-29 years	8	(5.4%)
30-39 years	35	(23.5%)
40-49 years	49	(32.9%)
50-59 years	28	(18.8%)
60-69 years	19	(12.8%)
70+ years	8	(5.4%)
N/A	2	(1.3%)

Mennonite educational institution attendance (one-year minimum)

123 (82.6%)	attended at least one Mennonite educational institution
25 (16.8%)	did not attend a Mennonite institution
1 (0.7%)	did not answer
50 (33.6%)	attended one Mennonite college
24 (16.1%)	attended one Mennonite high school and one Mennonite college
11 (7.4%)	attended two Mennonite colleges
11 (7.4%)	attended one Mennonite high school and two Mennonite colleges
9 (6.0%)	attended one Mennonite high school
9 (6.0%)	attended one Mennonite college and one Mennonite seminary
4 (2.7%)	attended at least one Mennonite institution at all three levels



Arlie J. Regier of Overland Park, Kan., writes about this piece of welded steel and stainless steel: "*Deadly Harvest* is a conceptual work concerning the hate-filled acts that pollute our earth. Worldwide, 100 million [land] mines located just beneath the earth's surface kill 25 people daily, while 2 million new mines are planted annually. Innocent people are dying all over the world for something they know nothing about and have no part in."

Chicken guts

Jean Janzen

After the sticky steam of plums
and the fuzz of peaches, we caught chickens
in the yard, stewing hens for canning.
Dad with a hatchet on the old elm stump
and I in the cellar scraping grit out of gizzards.
All in a sort of ritual dance: the chop,
the boiling body-dip for defeathering, the swing
through the singe of fire. Then, disembowel, dismember.
All for the grand finale behind glass—a chorus line
of chicken legs caught in the kick, like a photo.
This is not about death, or violence to animals,
not even about sex. It's about those intestines
I stripped into the bucket. About how they
could have been saved, stretched across a hollow,
and made to sing. It's about my cousin Eugene
who plucks and saws the gut of his cello until
something throbs in our own. And it's about dance,
not the scratch and kick of a chicken's life,
but the deep stomp that awakens the bottom
of the lake, the dance I want to do among
the festival of wild grass and flowers back
in my hometown. I want to lean low,
to paint my face with mulberry juice
and stay up all night. I want to put my ear
against the belly of the earth, to hear
it rumble, to hear it sigh.

Dave Linscheid

Jean Janzen, who lives in Fresno, Calif., submitted this poem to The Mennonite. *It also appears in her new collection,* Snake in the Parsonage *(Good Books).*

Letters

HIROSHIMA 50 YEARS LATER

The following incident, gleaned from *A Song for Nagasaki* by Paul Glynn, might help us as we commemorate the end of World War II 50 years ago.

In Nagasaki, 70,000 men, women and children were killed in the holocaust, including 8,000 Christians of the famous Urakami Cathedral.

The church decided to have a mass memorial for their followers on Nov. 23 of that same year and asked one of their members, Dr. Takashi Nagai, dean of radiology at Nagasaki University, to speak.

Survivors stood in solemn silence in the ruins of their cathedral waiting for Dr. Nagai to begin. He had gone to the cathedral earlier, and he knew God had given him a message. He talked about the sins of idolatry, hate and war and that repentance was not enough.

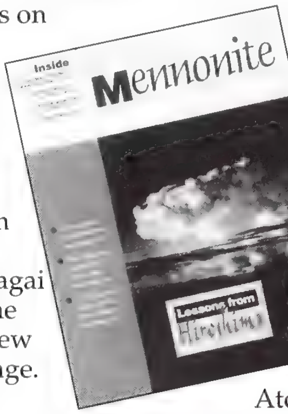
However, angry voices shouted in protest when Nagai suggested that God had chosen Nagasaki to become a burned sacrifice on the altar of World War II, atoning for the sins of all the warring nations. "A sacrifice to atone for the sins of others? A victim chosen by God? Never! Never!"

Nagai raised his hand and spoke again. The crowd quieted and listened once more. Had Nagai not sacrificed by helping them in this terrible crisis in spite of his own pain? Had he not lost his own wife in the holocaust? "We have kept the faith through three centuries of persecutions," he reminded them. "Our burning cathedral dispelled the darkness and has become the light of peace in the world." He ended his speech with, "Let us be thankful that Nagasaki was chosen for the whole-burnt sacrifice. Let us be thankful that through this sacrifice peace was granted to the world and religious freedom to Japan."

A silence followed. Dr. Nagai was able to avert the angry crowd through his own faith in God's goodness, in spite of great personal loss. Finding God at work even in the horrors of Nagasaki's A-bomb had a profound influence, not only on his hearers then but throughout Japan on Christians and non-Christians.

Nagai settled to a simple life in a 10-foot-square hut. Even after becoming bedridden, people from all over Japan flocked to his bedside to hear him promote peace and faith in God.

How do we respond 50 years later? *Peter and Mary Derksen, Fukuoka, Japan*



Both you and John Stoner appear to have an infatuation with some special perceived "evilness" of "the Bomb" (July 25 issue). Hiroshima was dreadful, but so was Dresden, where even more people perished in what amounted to nothing more than a test for the air forces of the United States and the United Kingdom as to whether conventional weapons could cause total destruction of a city. Had atomic weapons been unsuccessful, some Japanese city would surely have been destroyed via the Dresden method.

Atomic weapons are a tempting target for pacifist moralists who are "nontechies." Somehow it makes sense to the scientifically illiterate to view a high-tech (and to them mysterious) weapon as a much greater outrage than slings, arrows, swords, guns or cannons. What do you think of germ warfare? (From a technical point of view the last is especially bad, since the means of death keeps replicating itself and is impossible to contain once released into the environment.)

All these tools of destruction are equally bad from a moral point of view. Europe was able to depopulate itself more completely during the Thirty Years War (which occurred before armies generally had firearms) than it did during World War II.

Stoner is right to say that the major problem afflicting American society is its reliance on violence as social policy and that it is impossible for such a policy not to result in social disintegration. But the problem long predates atomic weapons. As Black Panther Stokely Carmichael said in the 1960s, "Violence is as American as apple pie."

This society from the start has been a violent, conquering, triumphalist one. The presence or absence of nuclear weapons is hardly the issue. This moral sickness is not of recent origin but has been here as long as the "Old World" has been invading the "New World." *John Tiessen, St. Paul, Minn.*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

A STRONG CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN THE ARTS

Budapest, Hungary—We continue to experience God's leading in Romania and the revival caused by the Holy Spirit. During a trip to Oradea in March I sang for the opening of a 3,000-seat Baptist church. Thousands of people came to this church each night for a week to hear the gospel. Plans are being made for a spring concert in that hall, featuring me and other classical musicians.

Meanwhile we work toward the goal of facilitating the local artists to reach their peers for Christ. As we have met musicians and visual artists in Hungary, Slovakia and Romania, we have learned of the tremendous need for a strong Christian witness in the arts. At the same time we have been impressed by the enormous potential for fruit if these brothers and sisters are trained, encouraged and mobilized. We will soon have enough contacts among artists to start fellowship meetings or informal gatherings in an effort to help them work together—something not happening outside denominational lines.

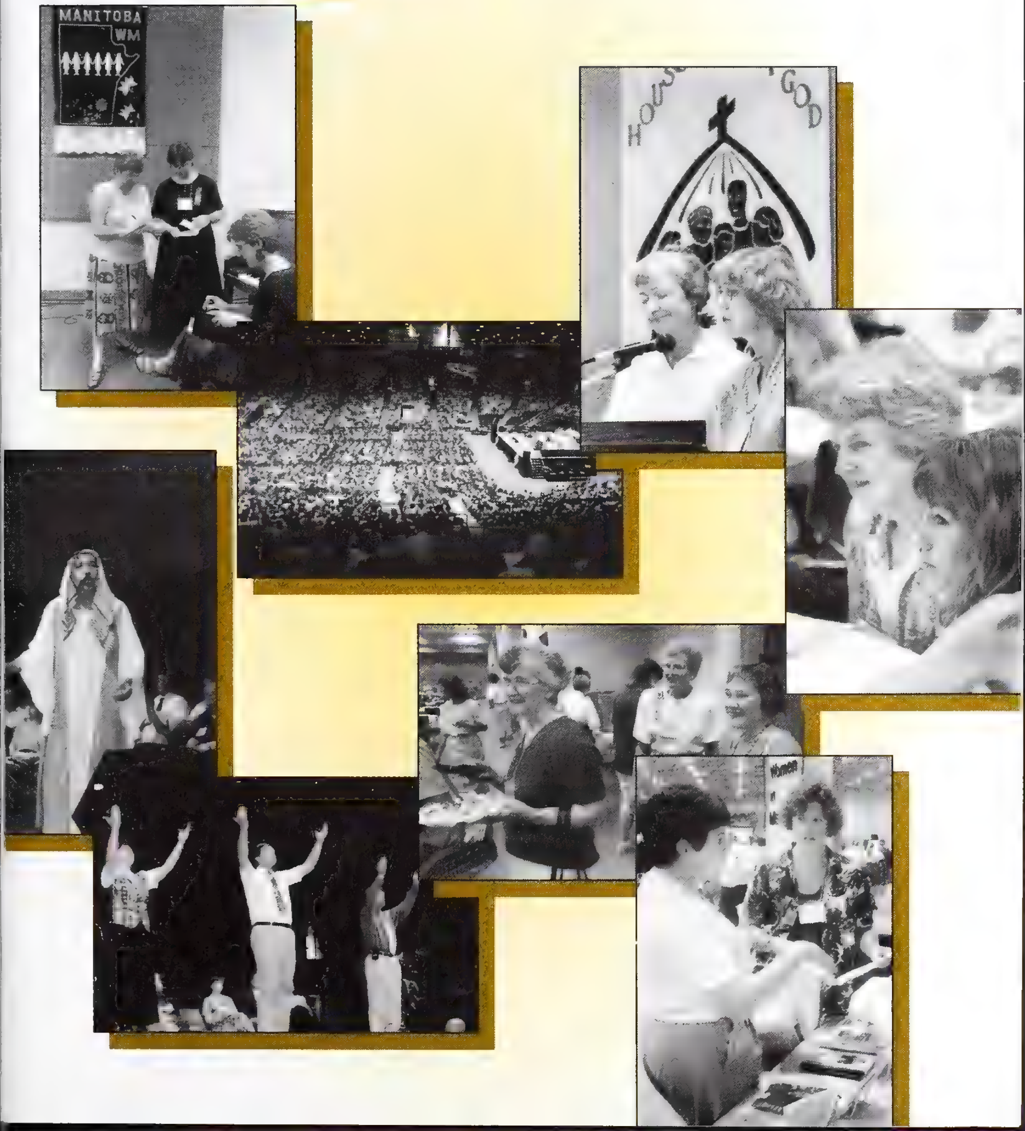
The summer's main event is an artists' conference here in Budapest Aug. 28-Sept. 5 for Christian artists from the former Communist countries. Together with Esther Augsburger and a team of Eastern European artists we are planning the gathering to further equip others to use their gifts in glorifying God through their creativity and learning to share Christ with their peers. *Timothy Bentch, mission associate with the Commission on Overseas Mission*

WM

THE Mennonite

SEPTEMBER 12, 1995

WINDOW TO MISSION


MANITOBA
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*Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth,
and teach me.*

Ps. 25:4, 5 NRSV

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Cover photo credits: (clockwise from upper left) 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, Vada Snider; 2, 7, 8, Gordon Houser

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

WM report to the General Conference

In one of the last reports at Wichita '95, WM officers Helen Hildebrand, outgoing Canadian Adviser, Anette Eisenbeis, outgoing Publications Chair, Katie Harder, Secretary, and Jeanne Rempel, President, reported for WM. Excerpts from their presentation follow.

Women in Mission, now in its 78th year, is an auxiliary organization of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Our current membership is 6,500 women in 300 groups, about half from Canada and half from the United States. Our 1994 receipts totaled over $180,000 U.S.

While some groups continue to focus on overseas mission, others balance that with local and North American outreach. Still other groups meet to support each other and new believers who have come into their congregations.

WM provides a unique way for women to be part of the church. Taking turns at leadership, monetary sharing, mutual support—this is being Christ's church to each other.

Take time to learn about the women's groups in your church. Ask them what they have decided their contribution to church life will be.

The vote to move toward integration will bring change. Individual group motivation is changing. What stand unchanged are the goals of bringing ourselves and others into reconciliation with Christ, and of involving women as a vibrant part of Christ's church.

Wichita '95: a critical juncture

We came to Wichita wondering about "the vote." Intermixed in that wonderful, tiring and eventful week were WM/WMSC-sponsored meetings—interactions which affirmed our vote for eventual integration.

At one workshop Jeanne Rempel and Terri Plank Brenneman led a discussion on Questions About Women's Groups.

At the WM/WMSC dinner we were in turn touched by the stories of Anabaptist women written by Fern Ruth and narrated by Raylene Hinz Penner, exhilarated by the music of the Foyer Grebel Choir, and encouraged to faithfulness by Esther Kunjam, keynote speaker.

At our luncheon business meeting, officers were introduced and new officers installed as we shared in a litany of installation and commitment.

The WM and WMSC booths became meeting places throughout the week. By the end of the week, the divider between them had been removed, a more than symbolic response to one song we sang together, "For we are strangers no more but members of one family."

Bek Linsenmeyer

What ideas have been useful to your women's group?

Vada Snider

Some groups have found prayer partnerships meaningful.

Vada Snider

Can you tell me what resources you have for programs? At the WM booth a number of resources were available. Contact the WM office for program ideas.

WOMENS MISSIONARY SOCIETY CONVENTION

Vada Snider

Will we be ready when the women come? (We were!)

Vada Snider

Will they be able to feed all those people? (They were!!)

Vada Snider

The Fuser Grobel French African choir sings at the WM/WMSI dinner.

We walk by faith

by Esther Kunjam

"My husband and I are the fruit of mission work in India," stated Esther Kunjam, keynote speaker at the WM/WMSC dinner at Wichita '95. Esther, a middle school teacher at the Wesleyan Christian School, and her husband, Chant, a bishop of the Mennonite Church of India and director of the Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India, are from Rajnangaon, M.P., India, and came to Wichita at the invitation of the Mennonite Church. Her story follows.

I was brought up in a Wesleyan Methodist orphanage. I never knew my parents or my birth date. The woman who handed me to the missionaries was unable to tell them how old I was. Although I weighed barely five pounds, from the sound of my cry they believed that I was about 6 months old. By faith these missionary women trusted God for some miracles in my life. They took special interest in me and cared for me. I was named Esther after the secretary of the board of missions who died in the same year I was born, 1946, and given the last name of Breedlove after the missionary lady who took care of me.

HOUSEHOLD OF GOD
Vada Snider

Esther Kunjam speaks at the WM/WMSC dinner at Wichita

As a young person I experienced deep bitterness and questioned why God didn't let me live with parents. I wondered why I couldn't have parents come to visit me and bring me goodies, having seen the other children with their families; but I was alone.

On completing my secondary studies I was forced to go to the seminary for one year. I was very unhappy about this, but in that year I accepted Jesus as my personal savior. October 21, 1963, was a glorious day in my life when I experienced that I was born into God's family. After this I began understanding God's abundant grace and plans for my life. The bitterness was gone. The "why" questions no longer mattered.

I studied at the seminary for two years, receiving my certificate. I promised God that I would serve only in Christian schools. God helped me to fulfill my desire to serve my own church and institution which had shaped me. I rejoiced in the fellowship of God and his people as well. The deeply committed and sacrificial lives of my missionary guardians has always been the inspiration of my life and has strengthened me spiritually.

A second major desire was for a stable home. I wanted to marry a minister from my Wesleyan church. God had to teach me that I should empty myself to know his will. In 1974 in my Easter Monday devotions the words from Isaiah, "they that wait for the Lord" (Isaiah 40:31), seemed very special to me. That same day I received a letter from my guardians asking if I would trust them to choose my husband. They wanted me to marry Chant, a Mennonite who was still studying in the seminary. I prayed over this. I'll never forget hearing God's voice: "Yes, this is the boy I have chosen for you to be your life partner." God's Spirit led me to resign from my teaching job in the Christian school. I told the principal that I was going to be married. She arranged a party and asked all the staff to bring wedding gifts for me. At this time Chant did not know about this nor did I know him or his family.

I bundled all my belongings and left for my home, some 900 kilometers away. Reaching home, I told my experience to my guardian. She was puzzled and said, "What will happen if the boy refuses to marry you?" I told her that he would never say no because it was the Lord's doing. And this became true, Chant never said no. By faith I accepted God's choice. We are today a happy family with four daughters.

It was not my will but God's will that I become a Mennonite. We are learning so much about Mennonites in the United States. I thank God for sending missionaries to India to establish the church. Thank God for all the missionary brothers and sisters who worked in the Indian vineyard and brought fruits to their Master. And thank God for the mission boards who supported them.

My husband and I are the fruit of mission work in India. I invite you to come to the Mennonite World Conference in India in 1997. Come to see the work that is now over 100 years old. Praise God and amen.

Suggested reading:

Freedom at Midnight by Larry Collins, and Dominique LaPierre (Avon, 1976, $5.95 U.S.)

Mother Teresa by Navin Chawla (ISIS UK 1994, illustrated, large print, $24.95 U.S.)

Calcutta-2nd edition by Geoffrey Moorhouse, (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1972).

Mennonite World Conference

The 85,000 Mennonites in India have invited us to come to their country, and we have accepted their invitation. January 7-12, 1997, is the date for Assembly 13 of the Mennonite World Conference. The site for the conference is St. Thomas School in South Calcutta. Passing through the gates from busy Calcutta onto the St. Thomas campus one sees wide open spaces, lots of green lawn, trees and gardens.

Marilyn and Glen Miller, Mennonite Central Committee workers in Calcutta, advise being prepared for what you will see in order to ease your transition into the city. "The trip from the airport to the city center passes through a slum, probably the worst area you will see in Calcutta," says Marilyn. This can be discouraging or even frightening for first-timers.

In Calcutta, life is lived on the streets. Mother Teresa was asked, "How have you been able to accomplish so much?" She said, "I approach people just one at a time." Marilyn adds, "If we can look at people just one at a time, the masses won't seem nearly so overwhelming and impersonal."

Stewardship—the cost of sending people to India—is another concern. Glen thinks the experience will be transforming. People coming to Assembly 13 and going out to villages will see poor but happy people. They may discover that happiness is not in what we can buy, but that other components actually lead to happiness. This experience may rearrange participants' priorities for the rest of their lives. If this happens, the trip will be well worth the money.

Canadian Women in Mission report

compiled by Ruby Harder

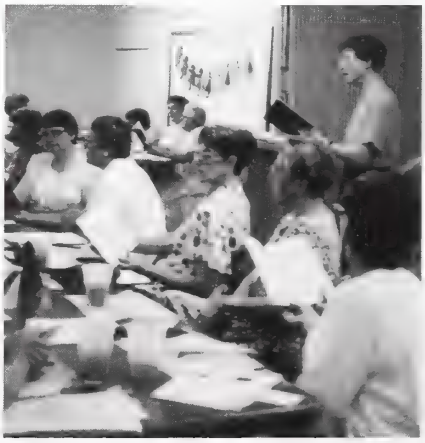
Canadian Women in Mission (CWM) counts over 3,000 women in its membership with 142 groups spread across Canada.

Canadians gathered in Newton, Kan., prior to Wichita '95 at the 43rd sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Canadian women celebrated together at a Sunday evening dinner. Irma Harder provided special music before dinner. Helga Froese, CWM vice president, led in devotions. CWM president Ruby Harder stated that "as each small group combines their resources, not only is the local church helped but the work of the church is multiplied. CWM's $128,400 budget permits giving to the church around the world."

Helen Neustater, outgoing CWM treasurer, reported on CWM's proposed projects for 1996:

1. Partnership ministries in which congregations partner with Native communities (Conference of Mennonites in Canada Ministries Commission project)
2. Translation into Chinese characters of *An Introduction to Mennonite History* by C.J. Dyck (Conference of Mennonites in Canada Resources Commission project)
3. Translation of the Canadian annual Prayer Week material (Although most cross-cultural pastors are fluent in English, they would appreciate translations as a resource to help build up lay leadership.) (Conference of Mennonites in Canada Resources Commission project)
4. Internship program at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in which students receive support for summer service as interns in Native communities and overseas
5. Contribution to General Conference
6. Spiritual growth assistance fund to help women in graduate-level studies
7. Canadian Mennonite Bible College scholarships

CWM invites Canadian women to "come and design CWM's future through intentional choice. Participate in dialogue which explores diverse options for the unfolding of the WM of tomorrow."



Bek Linsenmeyer

Kay Martens leads in singing at the Canadian Women in Mission dinner in Newton, Kan., prior to Wichita '95.

Journey thoughts

by Bek Linsenmeyer

Long before Wichita '95 when we were talking about integration, I heard "integration doesn't matter to the kids" and "the youth don't care about integration." Now Wichita '95 is behind us, the vote is for integration and I keep returning to something I heard there: When the vote was announced in the youth session, the cheering, clapping, stomping response went on for so long one youth sponsor wondered if the bleachers could withstand it. That leads me to another interpretation about the youth: Integration—coming together—matters greatly to them. It was not a matter of indifference but a time for rejoicing. (Well, maybe they didn't understand all the ramifications.) But I keep remembering those words to Timothy: "Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example" (1 Timothy 4:12). Is there anything to learn from them or from the junior high youth who walked over three miles in 100 degree heat, earning over $12,000 for bombie removal in Laos?

They give me hope. Sometimes we are fearful about who will take up the tasks. We and they together may have to redefine the tasks, but I believe it is true that God will not be without a witness. And I thank God for the joyful witness I saw in Wichita.

Bek Linsenmeyer

Vada Snider

Eve MacMaster, Voice *editor (left), and Bek Linsenmeyer,* Window to Mission *editor, at Wichita '95*

The Anabaptist Biblical Institute

by Violeta Ajquejay, writing for the Commission on Home Ministries

The Anabaptist Biblical Institute now has over 100 students. A program of the Commission on Home Ministries, it provides Anabaptist leadership training for Spanish-speaking church members, with courses designed for home study. Most students are working adults desiring more formal Bible study.

For more information contact: The Anabaptist Biblical Institute, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 or phone (316) 283-5100.

Adela Lopez, an Anabaptist Biblical Institute student, says, "I have more knowledge now about Anabaptist history. One thing I always questioned was, Who are the Mennonites? Where do they come from? Now I can answer with more confidence." Adela's comment is similar to those made by many Institute students.

The advisory committee for the Institute, begun in 1988 and comprised of Spanish-speaking pastors, develops the Institute's curriculum. Course material is carefully chosen to meet leadership needs in Hispanic churches.

The Institute now offers courses for both certificate (one year) and diploma (two years) levels.

The Institute's central office, located in Newton, Kan., sends course material to the different centers. The Institute is currently using some material from other institutions but its goal is to produce its own textbooks. The Institute now has three textbooks written by Mennonite authors.

The material for the course Anabaptist History and Theology was written by Juan Martinez, Mennonite theologian and rector of the Latin American Anabaptist Seminary in Guatemala. LaVerne Rutschman, a retired Mennonite theologian who was for many years a professor of Old Testament studies in Central and South America, wrote the textbook for the courses Introduction to the Old Testament I and II. Margaret Ediger, pastor of a Hispanic church in Dallas, Texas, and a former missionary to Colombia, wrote the textbook for the course Psychology of the Christian Family. José Ortiz, a Puerto Rican Mennonite theologian and writer, is presently associate professor of church ministries and director of field education at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va. He wrote the textbook for the course Introduction to the New Testament, and is in the process of writing the textbook for the course The Church's Administration.

The publication of textbooks by Juan Martinez and José Ortiz was in collaboration with the Latin American Anabaptist Resource Center (CLARA) in Bogota, Colombia. Published in 1993, they have become sources for other churches in North and Latin America. The Anabaptist History and Theology textbook can be used as an independent study for members in Hispanic congregations, or by anyone who wants to learn more about Anabaptist history.

Violeta Ajquejay, associate director of the Anabaptist Biblical Institute

WM support aids in the development of this important ministry.

Looking South

by Susan Janzen, writing for the Commission on Education

"I'm going home with new hope that the Lord is moving in many places and with a new vision for resourcing Anabaptist churches in Latin America," says Elsa Maria Caro of Bogota, Colombia, about her experience as an exchange visitor this summer in Scottdale, Pa., and Newton, Kan.

Elsa is the administrator for CLARA, the Latin American Anabaptist Resource Center which distributes literature to Spanish-speaking Anabaptist-Mennonite congregations in Latin America. Her responsibilities include serving as business manager, managing the budget, and working with the salesperson to establish marketing strategies.

CLARA, since its formation in 1990, has distributed more than 200 titles from other publishers and published 16 new titles. Because they are new to publishing, CLARA staff wanted to gain more knowledge about the industry.

Arrangements allowed Elsa to begin her four-month exchange by representing CLARA at a book conference in Miami. After a month-long intensive English course at St. Joseph University in Philadelphia, she traveled to Scottdale to learn more about Mennonite Publishing House. The last six weeks were spent with Faith & Life Press in Newton. During this time she also took part in Wichita '95 and became acquainted with COM staff.

"My hope is that one day CLARA will grow into a publishing house that will serve all of the Anabaptist communities in Latin America. We are the only organization of our kind. Our challenge is to continue to grow each day, to understand and respond to our context and to open ourselves to new ideas and resources. I'm trying to figure out how to apply what I've learned during my time in the United States to my situation in Bogota."

Elsa Caro, CLARA administrator

One important thing for Elsa was to see that for Mennonite Publishing House and Faith & Life Press, the relationship with the Mennonite communities is of utmost importance in order to learn of their needs and to produce accordingly. Elsa finds hope in the vision that as brothers and sisters we can work together in meeting the needs of the greater church in Latin America and other Spanish-speaking countries.

Elsa has been relating to a Brethren in Christ congregation for the past nine years. A strong church leader, she currently participates in a church planting effort in her apartment complex. She has a university degree in business administration and a certificate of theology from the Mennonite Biblical Seminary of Colombia.

Susan Janzen, editorial director for Faith & Life Press

WM funds support the Commission on Education in this work.

Mexico City Outreach

by Bek Linsenmeyer, writing for the Commission on Overseas Mission

Mexico City, with an estimated 1995 population of over 23 million, now ranks as the world's largest city, and the focus of a Commission on Overseas Mission church planting effort. COM, along with the Committee for United Anabaptist Mission in Mexico (CUMA), hopes to develop 10 large churches by the year 2000, with many house churches or growth groups in areas close to the churches.

Carmen and Vicente Miniño, working in evangelism and church planting ministries, have begun a new church in the area of Coyoacan, one of the over 2,000 colonies (urban areas) with no evangelical protestant churches. With contacts in other areas of the city, they hope to begin at least one more group in 1995.

Worship in the Miniño's apartment—1994

COM staff

A traditional Mexican piñata was broken as part of the celebration gathering at the new church facility—1995

COM staff

Vicente and Carmen with Lorena de la Rosa in the baptismal waters

COM staff

Your giving makes possible WM support of this ministry in Mexico City.

Viewpoints

by Jeanne Rempel

"One of the reasons we experience so much difficulty with our gifts is that parents have thought their chief function in life to be feeding, clothing and educating the young. However, our really important ministry is to listen to our children and enable them to uncover the special blueprint that is theirs. There is one line in Scripture that will instruct us in these matters: 'But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered over them' (Luke 2:19, NEB).

"Each child's life gives forth hints and signs of the way that she is to go. The parent that knows how to meditate stores these hints and signs away and ponders over them. We are to treasure the intimations of the future that the life of every child gives to us so that, instead of unconsciously putting blocks in her way, we help her to fulfill her destiny. This is not an easy way to follow. Instead of telling our children what they should do and become, we must be humble before their wisdom, believing that in them and not in us is the secret that they need to discover." (Elizabeth O'Connor, *Eighth Day of Creation*)

What do you feel when you read that quote? Does it harmonize with the way you work at parenting? As I've reflected on O'Connor's words, I've thought they may also apply to Women in Mission groups. Read it again, replacing "children" with "women," and "parent" with your group. What do you feel after a second reading? Is naming and nurturing women's gifts important in your group?

HOUSEHOLD OF G

Terri Plank Brenneman, WMSC president (left), and Jeanne Rempel, WM president, at Wichita '95

Since working with Susan Jantzen, our WM coordinator, I have appreciated two of her strengths: hearing what is behind women's words and questions, and affirming women's work and their dreams. She fleshes out O'Connor's words as I think of WM. Traditional groups, who have worked faithfully for so long, are gradually needing to look at ways of working that support women who are getting older, while trying to find ways to include, challenge and support new generations of women who have different needs and different ways of working at service.

We that work with the denominational office of WM don't have the secret that will make your group work (although we do have some helpful resources), but O'Connor's quote suggests the secret: The God-given unique gifts and the Spirit lie within the very women that you work with. Listen to them. Listen to yourself. Let your WM group increasingly reflect your women and their unique gifts. Courage as you dream and work.

Roundtable

by Susan Jantzen

Wichita '95 was a week for me to turn from months of planning to focus on people. What did I hear during two days of the Canadian Conference (held in Newton, Kan.) and five days at Wichita? Here are some samples, particularly from the Canadian Women in Mission interest group and the "Questions About Women's Groups" open forum.

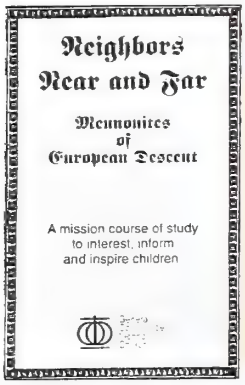
Vada Snider

Marian Hostetler, WMSC executive secretary (left), and Susan Jantzen, WM coordinator, at Wichita '95

- Women are active in church life and motivated to gather with other women.
- Women's Bible study groups have loyal attendance and some are growing rapidly, even serving as an entry point into the congregation.
- Women's organizations such as WM and WMSC (Mennonite Church) should not disband, but streamline.
- An important function of women's organizations is that of networking—relieving isolation.

At our **Friday business lunch** WM and WMSC presidents Jeanne Rempel and Terri Plank Brenneman gave women opportunity to write down advice concerning the future of WM and WMSC. This material will be shared in *Window* or by mail.

Conferences, like congregations or women's groups, are not perfect, yet as Christians we strive together to do the business of Christ's church as best we know how. It is not a conference, but God, who breathes direction into our lives. To the degree that God's Spirit is sought and heeded in our gatherings, we are blessed. Let us continue this chapter of our history as Women in Mission in our faithful Creator's great gathering of people of faith.



Neighbors
Near and Far

Mennonites
of
European Descent

A mission course of study
to interest, inform
and inspire children

Women in Mission has helped produce the fifth and final piece of the Neighbors Near and Far education series, **Anabaptists of European Origin**. WM needs $2,000 for our contribution to this project. Please encourage your group to contribute to this fund (listed in your contribution form) by next January. We believe users will enjoy this resource. Thank you for your contributions!

Facts & figures

by Susan Jantzen

Spring mail-in election results

As Women in Mission members your mail-in votes **approved** our new constitution and cooperation/integration proposal. Thank you for your participation in this vote!

New Constitution

Yes	1,277
No	98
Abstained	10
Absent	375

Cooperation/ Integration Proposal

Yes	1,189
No	168
Abstained	10
Absent	367

WMSC's vote also strongly affirmed the integration/cooperation proposal. Since our two denominations voted at Wichita '95 to proceed toward integration, we as WM and WMSC will also proceed toward integration "at whatever point feasible for meeting needs among Mennonite women." (see proposal)

THE PROPOSAL AS ACCEPTED

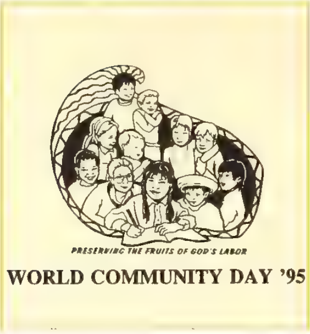
A. We of the binational committees of Women in Mission (WM) and Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) are committed to increased cooperation on the binational level at whatever points feasible for meeting needs among Mennonite women.

B. We are committed to eventual integration if this is chosen by the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church assembly sessions at Wichita '95.

C. We encourage district/conference committees and congregational groups to be open to cooperative and/or integrated events or ventures as desirable.

Blue GCWM financial goals sheets should have been received by presidents. Presidents, have you distributed the financial goals? Women, have you received them?

Window shopping

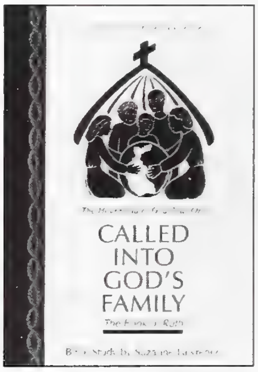

PRESERVING THE FRUITS OF GOD'S LABOR
WORLD COMMUNITY DAY '95

World Community Day, November 3

There is no greater fruit than the children given to our world. It will require the best that church and society working together can garner to preserve the children for their healthy total being in this world.

Anne Haynes Price, program writer, World Community Day

We know about Church Women United's World Day of Prayer. A lesser known CWU celebration is World Community Day. This year's theme is "Preserving the fruits of God's labor." The focus is responsible nurturing of all God's children. For the program packet or for more information, write or call CWU, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 812, New York, NY 10115; (212) 870-3339.



Household of God, Called Into God's Family, the jointly produced study guide for WM and WMSC, has been sent out to your groups. Each group should have received three copies. Additional copies ($4 U.S./$5 Cdn.) can be purchased through the WM office. Written by Suzanne Lawrence, *Called Into God's Family* centers on the Book of Ruth, a story of how the community of faith grows and includes diverse peoples, not for its own sake, but for mission. The questions for Sharing and Bible Study are thought provoking and will provide many opportunities for group sharing. An early reader of the Bible studies responded "it is wonderful." We encourage your use of this excellent resource.

Gems from the Files, a collection of Women in Mission programs, is now available from the WM office. Priced at $2.50, this booklet of programs from the 1940s to the 1980s is offered as a program planning aid.

The new Household of God banner, on display at Wichita '95, is available for conferences and retreats. Contact the WM office to reserve it for your meetings.

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt

Profile

Sculpting joy out of sorrow

Margaret Metzler Hudson's art is a tribute to life.

Emily Will

The garden surrounding Margaret Metzler Hudson's home and art studio in Fresno, Calif., enchants people of all ages. Dark-brown clay statuettes of chubby, laughing children and chipper woodland animals loll in the lazy greenery. Many guests, including some 2,000 schoolchildren, yearly visit this joyous oasis.

Margaret's art reflects a tribute to life, despite life's many sorrows. Bubbly and unconventional at age 68, she uses her art to put into action deep-felt beliefs about community, work and human relationships.

In addition to her private studio work, Margaret runs a nine-employee business producing clay figures, plant pots and garden fountains. Earth Arts Studio has made business professors shake their heads in disbelief. Margaret could be getting wealthy; instead, her production leader often earns more than she does.

Margaret believes each employee is an inventory of talents and skills. As manager she must bring forth a shared vision, state expectations clearly and furnish employees ample freedom to perform their jobs. She and employees make decisions by consensus.

Margaret is committed to hiring people who may otherwise have difficulty finding or keeping a job. Four of the five non-production staff have emotional or learning problems. "They need a place where they can bloom and grow, and we can offer that; we can be a kind of sheltered workshop," she says.

The delight her work brings others is remarkable considering the pain and problems in which it was born.

Although Margaret excelled in art as a child and earned a scholarship to an art academy, she stayed there only one year. "I had no passion for it. From age 8 I had said I wanted to be a missionary," she says.

In 1950, at age 22, Hudson set out for post-war Japan, where she met Mennonites and discovered her Anabaptist roots. After four years she returned to the States long enough to marry longtime friend Gil Hudson, a physics teacher. The couple went to Korea to teach at Kyungpuk University in Taegu, where their four children were born.

During a home leave in 1967, after 10 years in Korea, the family stayed at a retreat center in Stony Brook, N.Y. "I had been depressed for three years," Margaret says. "The depression revolved around human suffering." She had met many refugees and seen much affliction in post-war Korea.

As she took walks in the woods around the center with her children, she found meaning and hope in the new life sprouting among decaying logs. She dragged home some of the deadwood and fashioned it into sculptures. "I found a voice for my soul."

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

Beauty and fragility of life: *Margaret Hudson at work*

Artist Robert Kohls, a former Mennonite Central Committee worker in Korea, saw her work and suggested she might enjoy clay. He was right. "I fell in love with clay the minute I touched it," Margaret says.

The family never returned to Korea. Back in California, Gil contracted valley fever meningitis and could no longer teach. They returned to Margaret's parents' home, "where clay became my therapy," she says.

With Gil unable to work, the time came when Margaret felt she had to apply for Aid to Dependent Children. She was turned down; the welfare worker said the family would first have to spend what grandparents had given for the children's college.

Later that day Margaret struck up a conversation with a Mexican woman and told her how her family was refused assistance. "She told me, 'You're lucky they said no because once you get into that trap it's almost impossible to get out; you become afraid to let go of that security.'"

"I went home and went to work. I've never worked so hard in my life," she says. She fashioned the creatures she had loved as a child there on the home acre and took them to craft fairs.

Her art and business grew and prospered over the next two decades. Her friend and fellow artist Janice Leppke says, "Some in the art community say her characters are too sweet, but she has a tremendous way of capturing the innocence and beauty of nature."

Suicide: In 1988 both of Margaret's parents, who lived in an apartment built for them beside her home and studio, died. Although well into their 90s, her parents' deaths made her think about her own aging and mortality. That same year her son, unable to recover from the trauma of nearly freezing to death while lost in the Sierra Nevadas, committed suicide.

Three years later, while still trying come to terms with her son's death, Margaret took up painting.

She soon began to paint tulips and roses. Through the stages of bud to dried and dropping petals, Margaret explored the beauty, fragility and impermanence of life.

"I don't have the answer to much of anything anymore," she says, "but I am in awe of the gift of life and the presence of the Creator's arms undergirding us all."

Emily Will works for Mennonite Central Committee Information Services.

Do pastors pray?

Ways to make prayer a priority among pastors

Marlene Kropf

I was enjoying a conversation at a discussion table with four pastors when one of them startled me by saying, "Pastors don't pray, you know."

"They don't?" I responded. "How can that be?"

"Surveys show that pastors talk a lot about prayer but don't actually do it themselves." The discussion took another turn, and I never got another chance to pursue my question.

It's probably no easier for pastors to find time for prayer than it is for farmers or nurses or shopkeepers. Even though their work requires them to lead in public prayer and to teach others how to pray, pastors struggle with the daily discipline of setting aside time to be with God, listen and open themselves to the Spirit's transforming power.

From other conversations with pastors, I've learned how some of them indeed make prayer a priority in their lives. One pastor sets aside time for prayer as soon as she arrives in the office each morning. She sits in an easy chair, lights a candle, listens to prayerful music and opens herself to God's voice. "If I sit down at my desk first, I will never find time to pray. Too many things distract me there. I've learned that I must begin the day with prayer and then face the business on my calendar."

My own pastor goes on a prayer retreat one day each month. If we call the church office, the secretary tells us that the pastor is away praying for the day. His example encourages all of us to make time for prayer. In recent years at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, faculty have encouraged pastors-to-be to negotiate one day a month for prayer as part of their employment contract. To be able to lead others to God, pastors must regularly nourish their own relationship with God.

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Another pastor I know spends not one but two days a month at a retreat center. On the first day she works at odd jobs at the retreat center—weeding the garden, carrying wood, helping the cooks prepare meals. By the end of the day the noise and clutter in her mind and heart have receded, and she is ready to enter into the silent space of a night and day in God's presence.

RNS

We all benefit when pastors have time to pray. The church is strengthened as a body and in its life of ministry in the world.

Spiritual conversation: More and more pastors are seeking spiritual direction as a way to deepen their relationship with God. By meeting regularly with someone trained to listen to spiritual conversation, pastors expand their own ability to recognize God's voice and respond in faith and love. They find it helpful to be accountable to someone else for their practice of prayer. They are strengthened by sharing the struggles and joys of both their ministry and their personal walk with God.

Both Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Eastern Mennonite Seminary have inaugurated new courses in prayer and spiritual disciplines in recent years. Students have eagerly signed up for the courses and discovered the richness of intimacy with God as well as the rigorous commitment required for a faithful life of prayer. One conference minister told me, "We can see a difference in the seminary graduates you send us now. They know how to pray."

No doubt some pastors don't pray—just as some church members don't. I'm convinced, though, that most pastors long for a vivid sense of God's presence in their lives and work hard to make time and space for God. If pastors don't have time to pray, perhaps congregations need to initiate conversation on the subject. What would happen if elders and deacons offered to fill in for the pastor occasionally so a day of retreat would be possible? What about providing a special budget for books, tapes and videos that give guidance for prayer and other spiritual disciplines? Might the congregation pay for spiritual direction so pastors can regularly meet with a trained, trustworthy guide?

We all benefit when pastors have time to pray. The church is strengthened as a body and in its life of ministry in the world. What's more, pastors find joy in leading God's people because their service springs from the deep well of living water within.

Peacemakers in Hebron arrested

Hebron, West Bank (CPT)—Three Christian Peacemaker Teams personnel and one citizen of Israel were arrested July 22 for opening the gates of Hebron University. The four were released two days later.

Cliff Kindy, Wendy Lehman and Kathy Kamphoeffner of CPT and Maxeen Nunn, an Israeli citizen, were taken into custody by the Israel Defense Force after opening the gates that were welded and cemented shut in 1987. The school has remained open since then, but students have been forced to climb the 10-foot gate or walk an extra 10 minutes to a service entrance to go to school.

The CPTers hoped to help Palestinians have more access to education. "Everyone should have access to quality education. That is why we opened the gates," says Kindy. "Free and open access to education is a fundamental human right," says Kamphoeffner.

Restricted learning: Recently the government of Israel declared that Palestinian students are no longer permitted to study in Jerusalem, except for those who have already begun their studies in Jerusalem universities. A similar measure is being considered that, if passed, would prevent West Bank teachers from teaching in universities in Jerusalem.

Hebron University had attempted to open the gates in the past but faced strong resistance from the Israeli government. The school expressed interest in having outsiders open the gates.

The CPTers used sledgehammers and a cold chisel to break down the sealed gates, and the school's administration later placed a new door at the gate, which remained open as of July 27. But the Israeli Civil Administration has threatened to place Hebron under curfew unless the barrier is replaced.

International guests warn North Americans

Wichita, Kan. (*Wayfarer*)—The wealth and busyness of North American Mennonites may be keeping God's Spirit at bay, warned a group of Mennonites from Brazil, France, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia and Zaire.

In the project, hailed as a "mini Mennonite World Conference," participants in the "Mission to North America" spent three or four weeks visiting Mennonites across Canada and the United States. They gathered in Newton, Kan., just before Wichita '95 to report back their observations.

While the group expressed appreciation for the invitation to come and for the hospitality they enjoyed, members also had sober words of counsel.

> **"Some [Mennonites] only care about baseball, food, work, their grandchildren—being nice American people."**
>
> ***Richard Vandenbroucque***

"This is a word of reminder of the God of the rich and the God of the poor," said Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia.

While some congregations are active in justice work, the group said, these seemed to be the exception rather than the rule. "Some [Mennonites] only care about baseball, food, work, their grandchildren—being nice American people," said Richard Vandenbroucque of France. He was shocked to meet three young Mennonites who said they knew nothing of the war in Bosnia.

Mission to North America participants called for continuing cooperation among Mennonites around the world. "We can call each other to repentance, say that in the future we want to work together, push for the same kingdom," said Nzash Lumeya, Zaire.

He cited the common ancestry in 16th-century Anabaptism claimed by Mennonites around the world. These Anabaptists, with their spiritual and

Inside the news

Smaller Mennonite groups reflect on impact of GC-MC integration / p. 16

Mennonite in Belfast helps prevent a riot-in-the-making / p. 17

The Indiana-Michigan Conference of the Mennonite Church passed a resolution concerning Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind., at meetings July 6-8. *Gospel Herald* reports that Southside, also a General Conference congregation, moved "to accept a practicing homosexual into membership" and that that action prompted conference response. The statement, passed by 71 percent, calls Southside to reaffirm the Purdue '87 statement on sexuality and to offer "healing resources to those who find themselves in homosexual relationships." It continues, "If after a one-year period Southside Fellowship does not find itself in agreement with the counsel being given ... the relationship with Indiana-Michigan Conference will be further evaluated."

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee is advocating for an imprisoned Mennonite, but other Mennonites are not happy about it. Self-Help Crafts store workers in Winkler, Altona and Carman, Man., are upset that MCC is trying to help Cornelius Banman, Winkler, Man., be transferred to a Manitoba prison. Banman is serving a 5 1/2-year sentence in Anthony, N.M., for drug smuggling. He will have served three years in December. "I'm afraid he is going to die there," says his wife, who lives in Winkler. Abe Warkentin, director of MCC Canada Kanadier Concerns program, has been assisting Banman, her church and other Mennonite groups in requesting the transfer. "We are concerned that there be rehabilitation and healing, not just punishment," says Warkentin. Volunteers in the Carman, Man., thrift store signed a petition opposing MCC's involvement. Helen Kroeker, co-president of the store's board, says volunteers don't want money raised in their store used for this purpose.

Volunteers pitch in to make a cement floor for the Upper Room Fellowship, a small, Mennonite-affiliated congregation on the Navajo reservation near Salina Springs, Ariz. Volunteers came from Greeley (Colo.) Mennonite Church and Ridgeville Mennonite Church, Gordonville, Pa., May 22-23. Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz., paid for the cement. The Upper Room group's leader, Frank James, was licensed as a minister by Pacific Southwest Conference on June 18.

• • •

Descendants of a slave and the slave's owner found each other at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. Will Hairston, the new supervisor of grounds at EMU, found Darrell Hairston's name in the faculty/staff roll last September. Darrell works in EMU's multicultural office. Will's ancestor Samuel Hairston was noted as the man owning possibly the most slaves in the nation, with 1,600 slaves. Another slave-owning ancestor had a baby with one of the slave women, Darrell's ancestor. So Darrell and Will are related. The discovery disquieted both men. Will struggles with guilt. "It can pop up again and again," he says. Darrell had to confront his partly white ancestry. "The black side is a definite for me—no problem to see and appreciate. ... The white side is different. Slavery comes to mind and its unfairness and injustice." (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

social concerns, had a holistic approach to Christianity that is needed today, he said. "If we come back to this heritage of ours, we can make a difference." *Cathleen Hockman*

Smaller Menno groups OK with integration

Newton, Kan. (Meetinghouse)—The big are getting bigger, but that doesn't seem to phase most of those who are smaller.

Delegates from the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church in July voted to merge the two largest conferences in North America at a date yet to be decided. When united, the new entity will have well in excess of 150,000 members, according to 1995 statistics.

"Big brother just doubled in size," joked Henry Dueck, executive secretary of the 3,500-member Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference.

But he and leaders of other conferences say sharing a continent with a body that is so much larger should have little effect on their churches. "In general, I don't think that strikes alarm in us," Dueck said.

The next largest Mennonite body behind the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church is the Mennonite Brethren (MB) with 45,000 members in the United States and Canada. Not only will MC/GC merger have no impact on the Mennonite Brethren, most members don't even know about it, said Marvin Hein, executive secretary of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.

"The sad truth is that most Mennonite Brethren aren't even aware there was a move toward integration by the MCs and GCs," Hein said. "The rank-and-file people don't know what you're talking about."

Concern: One voice of possible concern came from British Columbia, where GCs and MBs have a history of cooperation, including schools and evangelism. MC/GC merger could be viewed as a shift toward increasing liberalism, said Walter Unger, president of Columbia Bible College in Clearbrook, jointly operated by British Columbia MBs and GCs.

"Among the more conservative MBs, it could be a little bit of a red flag," Unger said. "The larger [the conference] is, the harder it is to control theological drift."

Most conference leaders recognize the need for inter-conference cooperation, such as that which helped lead to the MC/GC merger decision.

"Those of us who work at a general [administrative] level see a need to do things together as much as possible," said Don Shafer, general secretary for the Brethren in Christ, which has 21,000 members in North America.

The area of greatest possible impact is that of inter-Mennonite projects. With Mennonite Central Committee, one potential area of concern is that the new MC/GC body could become dominant, either in actuality or perception.

"Smaller groups could say personnel is from that conference, policy is driven by that conference," said Ron Mathies, MCC chair and incoming executive director. But he added, "I don't see this as a major concern because everyone is thinking of this."

Leaders of the smaller groups agreed. "At these events where big and small meet for joint mission and ministry, my sense is there has always been regard for the smaller groups' members," Dueck said.

Of the 37-member MCC board, the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church each have four representatives. Fifty-six percent of MCC's 930 workers come from groups which will be part of the new MC/GC conference.

MCC responses to the merger, such as changes in board representation, have been discussed but no decisions made, Mathies said.

Some groups are wondering what will happen with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, of which the General Conference Mennonite Church is a member but the Mennonite Church is not.

"If the General Conference would pull out of AIMM, that would mean restructuring of programs," said Henry Klassen, mission board executive secretary of the 6,000-member Evangelical Mennonite Conference.

But Peter Rempel, GC representative to the AIMM board, said the Commission on Overseas Mission (GC) is committed to the organization. "We at COM would advocate continuing participation in AIMM [after integration]," he said.

In addition to the General Conference and the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, AIMM members are the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches, Evangelical Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Brethren. *Rich Preheim*

Mennonite in Belfast helps stave off violence

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—A Mennonite worker and his Roman Catholic colleague have been lauded throughout Ireland for their role in defusing a riot-in-the-making in July.

On July 10 some 10,000 Orangemen, members of a Protestant fraternity, gathered for a rally outside Portadown, a small town near Belfast in Northern Ireland. The Orangemen sponsor the celebrations each July, in remembrance of the 1690 battle in which a Protestant king prevailed over his Catholic counterpart.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary (police) forbade the gathering to march through the nearby Catholic community on the Garvaghy Road. After a Protestant leader delivered an inflammatory anti-Catholic speech, the Orangemen began to throw rocks at the police, who were outfitted in full riot gear and supported by scores of armored Land-Rovers. The army was on reserve to back up the 1,400 police.

At the same time hundreds of Catholics sat or stood along the Garvaghy Road, determined the march would not take place.

The constabulary put in an urgent phone call to Joe Campbell and Brendan McAllister, requesting their mediation services in the rapidly deteriorating stand-off.

Campbell, joint Ireland program coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Board of Missions, and McAllister are two of six full-time staff of the Mediation Network for Northern Ireland.

"As we traveled to Portadown, we reviewed everything we had learned about mediation and what our role would be. And we prayed," Campbell says.

Late Monday evening Campbell and McAllister began a torturous "shuttle" mediation, traveling back and forth among police, Garvaghy Road residents and the Orangemen.

"A number of times we thought the whole thing would fall apart," says Campbell. "And then we would get back to it and try again. Everyone was tense and weary."

"Reports of arms, caches of petrol bombs, misinformation propagated by the media, including CNN, increased the potential for all-out violence," write John and Naomi Lederach, MCC workers in Belfast. "The outcome of this confrontation would have a ripple effect through the country. ... The entire peace process was truly at risk."

The shuttle continued throughout the night, often at great risk to the two mediators, the Lederachs say.

The Mediation Network has built trust with the Royal Ulster Constabulary, working with them over the past two years to make them more sensitive in policing both Catholic and Protestant communities.

"The entire peace process was truly at risk."

John and Naomi Lederach

"This proved invaluable, as many knew Brendan and Joe by name and were willing to listen and cooperate with the mediation process being pursued," say the Lederachs, also on the Mediation Network's staff.

By morning an agreement had been reached. The march would take place, but in silence, and the protesters would allow them to pass but could display their placards of protest.

"As the marchers approached the Catholic protesters on the road, there was total silence on both sides," says Campbell. "The community leader gave quiet instructions to the protesters, and they got up and moved to the side of the road, many with their backs to the marchers, and allowed them to pass.

"You could have heard a pin drop. The air was electric, and I held my breath and prayed. But more than 500 Orangemen passed through without incident. As soon as they were through, the Catholic community began a cheer for the committee of Garvaghy Road residents who had worked so hard all night to come to an agreement.

"I'll never forget it. Each side felt they had won," Campbell says.

Mennonites in Burgos, Spain, are raising funds to start a hospice for AIDS patients. The hospice joins drug rehabilitation and prison ministries already supported by the Evangelical congregations of Burgos. Christians in Asia have forwarded $10,000 U.S. to help support the ministry. (*Courier*)

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The Hutterthal Mennonite Church of Carpenter, S.D., has withdrawn from the Northern District Conference and the General Conference Mennonite Church. In a June 23 letter to conference officials, church leaders expressed concern over what they believe to be departures from the basic doctrines on which the conferences were founded. Specific points of dissension include ordination of women, further dialogue on homosexuality in the church, and teaching of "feminist theology." Despite "fond" memories of the conference and its programs, the letter concluded, "We cannot condone the departure from God's Word any longer. We leave with love and without ill feelings."

• • •

Two Mennonite agencies in Lesotho are merging programs. Mennonite Central Committee and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission have long worked cooperatively; now the two agencies will function as one organization called Mennonite Ministries Lesotho. "Partners in Lesotho have largely not understood the existence of two Mennonite agencies working in this small country," says Jim Shenk, MCC Africa co-secretary. Lesotho is a nation of fewer than 2 million people completely surrounded by South Africa. In setting up the new Mennonite Ministries Lesotho, MCC and AIMM looked to programs in Botswana as a model. There the two organizations have been jointly administered as Mennonite Missions in Botswana since 1982.

Record

DEATHS

Clarence Bauman, 67, professor emeritus of theology and ethics at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., died Aug. 20. He taught at AMBS from 1961 to 1986. He is survived by his wife, Alice Margaret Nikkel, one brother and three sisters.

Bauman

Hilda Schroeder Epp died of cancer July 26 at age 57. She and her husband, Carl, served in Hualien, Taiwan, with COM for 13 years. She was a member of Fort Garry Fellowship in Winnipeg.

MINISTERS

Richard Davis was installed as pastor at Peace Church, Dallas, Texas, Aug. 27.

Edna Dyck was licensed for ministry at Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., Aug. 20.

Randy Hildebrand is minister of youth at Steinbach (Man.) Church.

Betta and **Marlin Kym** will be assistant pastor and pastor at Bellwood Church, Milford, Neb., beginning Oct. 1.

Tim Lehman has resigned as pastor at Faith Church, Minneapolis.

Allen Lind, is ending as pastor at Goessel (Kan.) Church the end of December. He and his wife, Sara, will serve with MCC in Brazil.

Gladys and **Simon Mungai** were licensed and ordained, respectively, as pastors at Morning Star Church, Muncie, Ind., May 21.

Rod Pauls served as summer pastoral intern at Peace Community Church, Aurora, Colo.

Vicki Penner is assistant pastor and minister of youth at Faith Church, Newton, Kan.

Debbie Schmidt is interim pastor at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan.

Ken Seitz will become pastor at First Church, Reedley, Calif., Nov. 1.

June Thomsen will be minister of youth and Christian education at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, beginning in November.

Elmer Wall, First Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan., celebrated 40 years of pastoral ministry on July 23.

WORKERS

Bertha Toews Born, Zion Church, Elbing, Kan., is half-time secretary for the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Kendra Campbell, Community Church, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a six-month MCC term in Burundi as a peace presence volunteer.

Linda Campbell has been named interim assistant professor of accounting at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Rachel Clemens has been named interim assistant professor of psychology at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

John Dueck ended 20 years of service in May as campus carpenter at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Tony Enns, Ottawa, recently retired from the Canadian International Development Agency, has been appointed interim director of MCC Canada's Kanadier Concerns program. He replaces **Abe Warkentin**.

Helen Ens ended 40 years of teaching in Mexico in July. She plans to retire in Manitoba. She served under COM in Mexico from 1955 to 1995.

Arlyn Entz, Zion Church, Elbing, Kan., is beginning a three-year MCC term in Bangladesh in soybean innoculant production.

Donna and **Loren Entz**, COM and AIMM workers in Burkina Faso, returned to the United States in late June for a one-year NAA. They are living in Elbing, Kan.

AIMM—Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission
COM—Commission on Overseas Mission
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
NAA—North America Assignment
SALT—Serving and Learning Together

Joann Feeney, Akron (Pa.) Church, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Akron as an administrative secretary.

Lois Flickinger, First Church, San Francisco, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Ephrata, Pa., as quilt room supervisor.

Jaime Friesen of Altona, Man., and Community Church, Markham, Ill., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Zambia, teaching English at an elementary school and working at a local church.

Teneille Friesen, Tiefengrund Rosenort Church, Laird, Sask., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Indonesia as a therapy assistant.

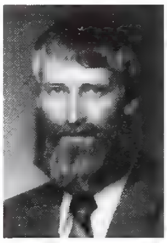
Kathy Jung has been named interim assistant professor of family and consumer services at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Maren Kliewer, North Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Chad as a church worker.

Janet Konrad, Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, is

Dueck

D. Entz


L. Entz

Flickinger

T. Friesen

Kliewer

Konrad

Laverty

Loewen

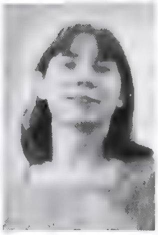
Mumaw

beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Dhamtari, India, as an assistant English teacher.

Juanita Laverty, Olive Branch Church, Waterloo, Ont., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Brazil as a child-care worker.

Darryl Lepp, Harrow (Ont.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Jamaica as an instructor and social worker at a boys' home.

Gina Loewen, Altona (Man.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Indonesia as an English teacher and a music teacher's assistant.


B. Neufeld

G. Neufeld

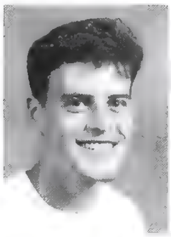
D. Stoesz

E. Stoesz

Thieszen

Waltner

Wiens


Woelk

Catherine R. Mumaw, Eugene (Ore.) Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term at Kathmandu University, Nepal, where she serves as an education adviser.

Bev and **Gerald Neufeld**, COM and AIMM workers in Burkina Faso, are on a three-month NAA, living in Manitou, Man. They plan to return to Burkina Faso Oct. 19.

David and **Elvera Stoesz**, Crystal City (Man.) Church and COM, AIMM and Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference workers in Burkina Faso, have completed two years of service teaching missionary children.

Luzdy and **Tim Stucky**, COM workers in Colombia, completed three years as administrators of the Mennonite Retreat Center at Cachipay. They are members of Shalom Fellowship, Tucson, Ariz.

Eugene Thieszen, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., and COM and AIMM worker in Botswana, is on an eight-month NAA. He will return to Botswana in February 1996.

Melissa Waltner, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., completed one year teaching English in China with China Educational Exchange.

Tonya Wenger, Akron (Pa.) Church, and Germantown Church, Philadelphia, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Kingston, Jamaica, as a counselor at a women's center.

Lilette Wiens, Mississauga (Ont.) Fellowship, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Curitiba, Brazil, as a day-care worker.

Claus Wiebe, First Church, Winnipeg, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Paraguay as a social worker with street children.

Andrew Woelk, St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, is beginning a one-year MCC SALT term in Asuncion, Paraguay, as a social work assistant with educational and recreational activities for street children.

Fern D. Yocum, Madison (Wis.) Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Bangladesh as a livestock specialist and agricultural adviser.

Kristen Yoder, Akron (Pa.) Church and Germantown Church, Philadelphia, began a two-year MCC term in August in Akron as a buyer for Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Yocum

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **Self-Help Crafts media coordinator** (Akron, Pa.). This two-year position is available in October. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have working knowledge of MCC and Self-Help Crafts goals and merchandise; corporate communications training and experience; and writing, research, photography, audiovisual and graphic experience.

Interested people should contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. Applications due **Sept. 22**.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **director of Visitor Exchange Programs** (Akron, Pa.). This two-year position is available Dec. 11. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must be U.S. citizens fluent in English and have experience/training with intercultural relations and/or mediation among young adults. Bachelor's degree required, master's in relevant field preferred. Overseas living experience preferred.

Interested people should contact **Dwight McFadden, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. Applications due **Oct. 28**.

Goshen College announces a two-year nontenure position in **organizational management**. Employment begins immediately upon hire. Qualifications include MBA, managerial experience and previous successful teaching. Experience with adult students is preferred. Responsibilities include teaching during evenings and directing applied research projects. Subjects include principles of management, research and decision making, marketing, accounting, groups and leadership, human resource management, and corporate and social responsibility. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply send a resume and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**.

Vice president and academic dean (undergraduate program and selected graduate programs) at **Eastern Mennonite University**. 12-month, full-time position. Remuneration and benefits commensurate with experience and in accordance with the administrative pay scale. Responsible to manage the academic program of the undergraduate division, including faculty matters, curriculum and related academic programs; oversee the management of the libraries and selected graduate programs, the adult degree completion program and the athletic program. Must have doctoral degree in appropriate academic or educational administrative field and college/university teaching experience; administrative experience preferred. Must have Christian commitment with a vision for the role of higher education in the mission of the church, knowledge of the Mennonite Church, committed to Mennonite faith and practice, committed to the philosophy and mission of EMU, leadership ability and positive interpersonal relationships.

Application deadline: **Sept. 30**. EMU reserves the right to fill this position or extend the deadline. Minorities and women are especially encouraged to apply.

If interested, please contact **EMU President's Office, tel. (540) 432-4100; fax (540) 432-4444; e-mail: LappJ@EMU.Edu**.

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(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

General secretary for the **General Conference Mennonite Church**

Wanted: nominations and/or applications for general secretary position, open in 1996

Qualifications: strong administrative skills, including personnel and finances; inter-Mennonite experience; knowledge of GCMC churches in Canada and the United States; seminary education; ability to articulate a vision for leading the GCMC into a new century of unity and mission, including ability to obtain support and confidence in the conference

Send profile along with name and address **before Oct. 15** to Darrell Fast, moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 364, North Newton, KS 67117-0364.

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Church

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Presents a lively, fun look at North American children preparing school kits and Nicaraguan children receiving them. "Talking crayons" help take the viewer through school kit assembly, transportation and distribution. Uses animation and drama to spark children's interest in school kits, an MCC material resource project, and offers them a glimpse into the lives of some Nicaraguan children.

Mennonite
Central
Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151 (717) 859-3889

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **store manager** for the Ephrata, Pa., Self-Help Crafts corporate store. This two-year position is available in November. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have knowledge and support of Self-Help Crafts' mission, retail sales and management experience, and experience in merchandise display and store layout.

Interested people should contact **Goldie Kuhns, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. Applications due **Oct. 2**.

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Center for Conflict Studies and Peacemaking

Goshen College seeks applicants for **campus minister** beginning Aug. 1, 1996. Qualifications include doctorate (M.Div. acceptable) in areas directly related to campus ministries and prior work experience in ministry as pastor, teacher or pastoral counselor. Responsibilities include oversight of chapel and community voluntary service, pastoral care, assisting students in finding meaningful congregational life, and planning and administration of seminars and workshops. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply send a resume and three letters of reference to **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**. Applications will be received until **Oct. 15**.

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Reviews

FILMS

SAVING THE KIDS

Dangerous Minds, *written by Ronald Bass, produced by Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer, directed by John N. Smith*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Disney has come out with a new *Stand and Deliver* to inspire students heading back to school. *Dangerous Minds* shows how one teacher with guts brings out the best in kids the rest of the world has given up on. Based on LouAnne Johnson's book *My Posse Don't Do Homework*, the film features Michelle Pfeiffer as Johnson, a divorced ex-marine determined to make a difference to her students.

Pfeiffer brings out both a tender fear and a stubborn determination that draws empathy from the audience. Director John Smith has done Pfeiffer (and us) the favor of playing down the physical beauty that has sold so many movies in order to let Pfeiffer make a showing as a serious actor. She has risen to the challenge.

But the ones that finally win the audience's hearts are the students—inner-city kids that learn to interpret Bob Dylan and Dylan Thomas while facing the struggles of street violence and single parenthood.

The only disappointment is the knowledge that even though the story is based on true-to-life experience, the movie is fiction. At best only the smallest part of the story is told. For every LouAnne Johnson who turns around a classful of lives, how many caring teachers are unable to make a difference?

Nothing backfires on the LouAnne Johnson of *Dangerous Minds.* While she struggles with the emotions of loss of her students, she is not faced with the lawsuits that could follow any number of her unorthodox methods.

But *Dangerous Minds* is just one story. And it is a story of hope. When all we hear about our public school system is case after case of failure, one success story is water in the desert. Thanks, Disney, for the back-to-school boost.

Linda R. Chen

Ready to teach: *Michelle Pfeiffer as Marine-turned-teacher LouAnne Johnson*

BOOKS

DIVERSE VIEWS ON PEACE

The Church's Peace Witness, *edited by Marlin E. Miller and Barbara Nelson Gingerich (Eerdmans, 1994, 228 pages)*

Reviewed by Carol Penner, Vineland, Ont.

This is a good book. It's a collection of essays written by scholars from many different church traditions, all focused on the theme of peace. There is an emphasis on biblical and historical roots of the church's peace witness.

The strength of the book lies in its diversity of writers, and that's where its hopefulness lies as well. The fact that this book exists shows that scholars are talking together and examining the theological and biblical underpinnings that divide and unite Christians on the important issue of peace.

The first article, by Howard John Loewen, is definitely geared for the scholarly reader, but other articles are more accessible. The two articles about the Old Testament, written by Ben Ollenberger and Dianne Bergant, are particularly compelling because of the honesty with which the writers meet their material.

Bergant tackles the problem of the warrior Jahweh in the light of the horrors of modern warfare and asks whether this image can be at all appropriate in our time. There are also solid articles that deal with peace in terms of Jesus, the New Testament and early church history.

In the introduction Jeffrey Gros says that "all Christians confess that Christ's peace is to transform our lives and that we are to bring Christ's peace into the life of the human family." Gros goes on to suggest that in spite of this common confession, Christians have taken up arms against each other.

The discussion of violence in this book is almost invariably concerned with the issue of violence and the state, likely because that is the issue over which churches have most publicly disagreed. The issue of violence

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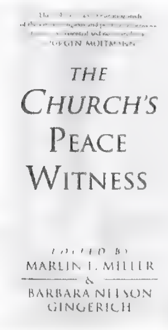
against women and children, also a vital area of peace (and one that is being discussed in similar ways in most Christian traditions) is not mentioned at all, nor does it seem to inform the discussion in any way.



For example, Paul Anderson talks affirmatively about redemptive suffering. His discussion, while originally framed within the context of armed conflict, ends with seemingly universal truths about Christians needing to "embrace the cross."

This is the type of language that is not good news for women and children in abusive situations, and it points to a need to have a nuanced theology that recognizes different kinds of violence.

A book such as this, which focuses on a scholarly approach to ecumenical dialogue, leaves me uneasy—the unwritten assumption is that ecumenism is hammered out in the scholarly arena. That is not the intention of the writers, but it's an impression that scholarly books can have. *The Church's Peace Witness* needs to be read in the context of a church that has historically been divided over the issue of peace yet where people from different churches are indeed working together in vital ways for peace and justice. This book's exploration of the roots of peace can only serve to aid that work.

MENNONITE PHILANTHROPIST

Johann Cornies *by David H. Epp, translated by Peter Pauls (CMBC Publications/Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1995)*

Reviewed by Gerhard Ens, Winnipeg

This biography has seen three publications in roughly 40- to 50-year intervals in its almost 100 years of existence. The revival of interest in this period in Russian Mennonite history and in Cornies has included novelists, anthropologists and historians. Historical/analytical writings have tended to be critical of Cornies, both his aims and methods.

Johann Cornies was born in 1789 in the village of Boerwalde near Danzig (Gdansk) in what was then West Prussia. At 16 he joined his parents in the second great trek of Mennonites to Russia, settling eventually in the Molotschna Colony.

Without formal education beyond elementary schooling, Cornies became a representative of his people, a confidante and official of the Russian administration of its "foreign" colonies, and a philanthropist. He almost single-handedly raised Mennonite agriculture from little more than subsistence to a profitable enterprise. He raised the level of education in the Molotschna Colony.

Judgments on Cornies range from the panegyric prose of P.M. Friesen to some contemporary scholars' suggestions that Cornies betrayed Anabaptist ideals with his emphasis on private property and production of wealth. It can be argued, of course, that Cornies transformed the Mennonite brotherhood to a "Mennonite Commonwealth" (a term coined much later by David G. Rempel). But one could also ask what kind of a brotherhood could permit over half its members to be proletarianized and marginalized, that spitefully refused to register the births of the breakaway "Kleine Gemeinde," that insisted on a narrow ecclesiastical control of all aspects of life.

David H. Epp belongs to the P.M. Friesen school of historians in his evaluation of Cornies. A minister, teacher, journalist and historian, he lived through World War I and the early Stalinist purges.

I find his German version a good read and disagree with the translator's statement that "[Epp's] prose is frequently unnecessarily convoluted." Peter Pauls has provided an excellent translation, but I am not so sure the translator in the process of breaking down some of the longer sentences was able to catch all the nuances of the German original.

On the whole though, Pauls has given the English-speaking constituency of North American Mennonites a creditable rendition of David Epp's monograph of 100 years ago.

AID TO TRAUMATIZED CHILDREN

Healing the Children of War: A Handbook for Ministry to Children Who Have Suffered Deep Traumas, *edited by Phyllis Kilbourn (MARC Publications, 1995)*

Reviewed by Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen, Newton, Kan.

Written from a Christian perspective, this book is a must for everybody who works with traumatized children anywhere in the world, including here

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in the United States and Canada. Fourteen contributing authors whose collective professional expertise spans child psychology, educational psychology, clinical psychology, childhood education, pastoral and family counseling and therapy, neuropsychology, theology and journalism, and whose experience was gathered in many different war zones of the world, offer practical methods for assisting traumatized children in regaining hope.

The essays, each with a helpful bibliography of references, are organized into five thematic sections. Part One delineates the tremendous psychological and physical scope of suffering that the impact of war has on children, and how to recognize and understand such troubled children. Illustrations in this section are heart-wrenching photographs of children in the war zones of Liberia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Afghanistan, Croatia, Beirut and Rwanda.

Part Two, "Intervention Concerns Stemming from War-Related Trauma," shows how to comfort the grieving child, how to assist in moral development, how to help physically disabled and sexually abused children.

Part Three, "Principles of Intervention Planning," offers a series of step-by-step methods to treat the inner and outer chaos experienced by traumatized children, illustrated by case studies, drawings and charts. The authors recognize that caregivers also need care when dealing with traumatized children. With a total of nine essays, this section is the heart of the book, concluding with a practical approach to peace education and conflict resolution for troubled children.

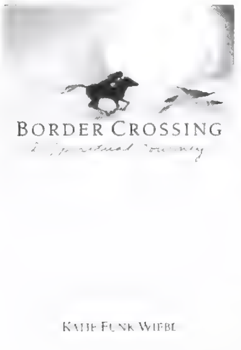
Part Four, "Theological Implications for Intervention Planning," outlines the issue of forgiveness, as well as the question of how we might understand suffering from the biblical perspective. Both forgiveness and the understanding that "there are realities deeper than our pain" are critical in the healing process, in finding ways to help children regain a notion of purpose in life. The concluding essay of Part Five focuses on the overarching goal in providing rehabilitation interventions for scarred children: restoration of emotional, spiritual, mental and physical health, so that they may live with hope, so that our world may have hope.

AGING AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Border Crossing: A Spiritual Journey
by Katie Funk Wiebe (Herald Press, 1995, 230 pages)

Reviewed by Martha Friesen Graber, North Newton, Kan.

The transition to retirement from teaching at Tabor College was surprisingly uncomfortable for Katie Funk Wiebe, who thought she had planned well for this stage of her life. Being an astute observer, a thoughtful examiner of life's experiences, a contemplative and inspirational writer, she was not content to drift into a troubled old age or to accept the depressive uneasiness and sense of uncertainty about her identity.



Knowing the power of story, Wiebe reflects on the story of her life and the wisdom her experiences can impart to bring meaning and a sense of direction to her future. She writes frankly, sharing her vulnerability and the doubts and fears she experienced in life's earlier "border crossings." She examines the changes and pain involved in her growth toward and search for spiritual maturity.

Wiebe asks, "What does God intend for the older adult?" She reflects on the life stories of her parents and older relatives and friends, suggesting that handing on the faith enables them to leave in peace. She looks at the many stopping points on life's journey—preparations for the next steps in the journey under God's care. She finds that the adventure of learning and creativity can continue, that God can set a person on a meaningful course of discipleship at every age. This book records her journey to this position, and to the realization that each border crossing must address the identity question.

Wiebe values humor and shares her family's laughter. She finds hope in seeing older adults open themselves to new and richer patterns for their lives and in realizing God can be trusted even in the depths of life—and unto death. Her months of writing led to renewal in her own life as she faced the issues older adults face.

This book will help people of all ages understand the inner journey of older people who yearn for continuing meaning in their lives. It can help churches reorient their thinking and shift the way they relate to their growing older population. It is an enjoyable and inspiring story—a gift to the reader.

Resources

• • ▼

- **Building on the Rock: A Biblical Vision of Being Church Together from an Anabaptist-Mennonite Perspective** by Walfred J. Fahrer (Herald Press, 1995, $7.95 U.S./$11.35 Cdn.) helps reclaim the vision of the church as a true community of faith. Discussion questions and bibliography are included.
- **When God's People Let You Down: How to Rise Above the Hurts that Often Occur Within the Church** by Jeff VanVonderen (Bethany House, 1995, $8.99 U.S.) looks at why hurts in the church are so debilitating, and how one can move past the pain and establish healthy relationships in a healthy church.
- **God's Earthkeepers: Biblical Action and Reflection on the Environment** by William van Geest is a study/action guide offering pespectives on God as Creator and on our stewardship or "earthkeeping" role. MCC Canada helped sponsor this book. Order from Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, Box 8800, Station B, Willowdale, ON M2K 2R6; (905) 479-5885; fax (905) 479-4742; e-mail CompuServe 102214,3020. For 1-49 copies $6.50 Cdn. each, 50-99 copies $5.50 each, 100 or more $4.50 each.
- **After the Funeral** by Jane Loretta Winsch (Paulist Press, $4.95 U.S.) helps children deal with their grief; shows, through the experiences of 10 grieving children, that there are different ways to express grief.

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Editorial

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The courage to see

Our Christian faith is not just a head trip. Nor is it only a matter of willpower. It involves our whole selves—our bodies, our minds, our emotions.

Art is one way of involving us—our minds and emotions—in an act of communication that may change us. Perhaps that's one reason art is often resisted; we are afraid of being changed.

Jesus exemplified this approach. He confronted people with deeds that were often symbolic, such as his driving out money-changers from the temple or ordering Simon Peter to cast his nets on the other side of the boat and haul in the huge load of fish. He mystified and challenged people's thinking with his parables, an art form he perfected.

He was a poet. Even when he lamented over Jerusalem's disobedience, he used metaphor: "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" (Luke 13:34). Or when he excoriates the scribes and Pharisees, he uses a humorous image: "You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!" (Matthew 23:24).

Jesus' use of poetic language and symbolic acts flows out of his acquaintance with the Hebrew Scriptures, which are filled with stories, poetry and prophetic actions that use metaphor to speak God's word to Israel.

> *We need artists to challenge our usual ways of seeing the world and ourselves in the world, to help us experience the pain of others and exult in the beauty of God's creation.*

The Psalms were Israel's worship book, and worshipers would have memorized many of them, just as we know many hymns today by heart. David was both a poet and a musician, and his psalms exhibit powerful emotions, from joy and praise to sorrow and cries for vengeance.

Solomon employed many artists to build and furnish the temple God ordered him to build. Earlier his father David set aside people "who should prophesy with lyres, harps and cymbals" (1 Chronicles 25:1).

To dramatize the conquest of Egypt and Ethiopia the prophet Isaiah "walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and portent" (Isaiah 20:3). As a sign of hope, the prophet Jeremiah publicly bought a field at Anathoth (Jeremiah 32:6-15).

Then there are the stories, too numerous to mention, that use all manner of methods—from tragedy and comedy to satire and irony—to communicate God's action among the people of Israel.

Byzantine icons: The Bible is not only filled with art, it is a work of art, unmatched in the world's literature. And it has inspired a wealth of art down to the present, from Byzantine icons to stained-glass pictures to Rembrandt's sketches and paintings to Handel's *Messiah.*

We cannot live full lives without the presence of art. Nor can we grow without being confronted on deeper levels than mere arguments. We need artists to challenge our usual ways of seeing the world and ourselves in the world, to help us experience the pain of others and exult in the beauty of God's creation.

We have a tendency to view the Bible as a book of rules that tells us how to live. But it is more. It uses stories, poems and images to show us how others have lived and how we are to live. According to Gil Bailie in *Violence Unveiled*, "what Scripture is intended to achieve is a conversion of the human heart."

Facing Scripture and our world and ourselves is not easy. We wear many blinders that prevent us seeing what is real. We need the courage to see. Art can help us remove those blinders, help us look at and listen to the world in a new way. Not all art will be successful at this, but we must be open to its power to transform us. Only then will we come closer to loving God with our whole selves, our heart, soul, mind and strength. *Gordon Houser*

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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- The last Mennonite minister in Russia (see page 3)
- Soul-giving work (see page 5)
- Acts of love in the shadow of the Soviet Machine (see page 6)

A Chechen refugee is moved to tears by the singing of people who brought her supplies.

Christian love in the former Soviet Union

Prologue

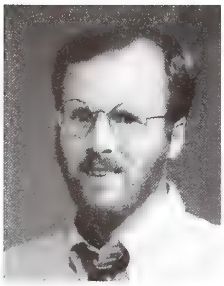
The other day I spoke with Emily Will, who visited the former Soviet Union last November and wrote several of the articles in this issue. She described the gray monotone cityscapes, the large empty buildings and the desperate situations of many people.

These articles, however, show points of light in the gray. People like Boris Khersonsky (page 6), Dmitry Rzhepishevsky and Raisa Talyas (page 8), and Alexander N. Mokhovikov and Alla Povezinnova (page 8) are doing sacrificial, compassionate work in a land that suffered 70 years under the dehumanizing Soviet system.

With help from Florence and Otto Driedger, social work practitioners and professors from Regina, Sask., where they are members of Peace Mennonite Church, these trailblazers are learning to do social work where it hasn't been done.

Walter and Janet Bergen are also important links between us and people in the former Soviet Union. They serve with Mennonite Central Committee and the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. They are members of Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Clearbrook, B.C.

Last May, Peter Rempel, on staff with COM, visited Heinrich Dyck, the last leader in Russian Mennonite churches qualified to ordain ministers (page 3).



J.B. Miller (page 12) reports on a study of who gives to charity and why.

Sara Wenger Shenk (page 13) offers helpful advice to parents of teenagers.

And don't miss our special Christmas gift offer (page 14). *gh*

Next issue: Mennonite higher education

Cover: Photo by Boris Yablokov

The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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The last Mennonite minister in Russia

With Russian Mennonite churches on the decline, Baptists express an interest in Anabaptism.

Carla Reimer

When Heinrich Dyck immigrated to Germany this summer, for the first time in 200 years the Russian Mennonite churches no longer had a leader qualified to ordain ministers.

This fact together with the declining number of members has dimmed hope for the future of what is known as the Kirchliche Mennonite Church, which currently has 200 to 300 members, primarily in locations scattered across Siberia.

"The mood of many members and leaders is one of resignation to the gradual expiration of their congregational life," says Peter Rempel, who visited with Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren and Baptists in Russia last May. Peter is the personnel secretary and secretary for Europe for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

At Heinrich Dyck's church in Protusovva, Siberia, for example, the membership has decreased from 100 to 25 in the last several years. "We are so small now and we have no energy to work with the youth," Heinrich said.

Many Mennonites are choosing to leave because they are discouraged about their living conditions in Russia. "Even though they know it will be difficult for them to make a switch to another country, they are concerned about the political and economic deterioration they see around them," Peter says.

In Neudachino, a village established in 1908 by Mennonite families from the Ukraine, there has been an influx of refugees from the former Soviet Asian republics and from the war zones in the Caucasus, including Chechnya.

For the most part, it has been the older generation who has remained in Russia despite the problems. "They have stayed the longest because they have felt rooted there," Peter says. "They simply want to continue their traditional patterns of worship with dignity and out of respect for their forebears until their congregation disappears."

The younger Mennonites who have chosen to stay often assimilate into the mainstream culture. A number have married Russian nationals and attend churches of other denominations.

Some do not participate in any church community, but they are eager to preserve the German language and culture. Two teachers Peter met during his trip fit into this category. "They appreciate the values they observed as children in their Mennonite communities," he says. "But they believe the divisions in the church discredit it."

A few people from other faith traditions have joined the Russian Mennonite churches. The treasurer at one Mennonite church attended there after he received an invitation from his neighbor. Another believes that Anabaptist theology can help address issues related to ecology and peace.

Continued on next page

The last Mennonite minister in Russia

> *"The mood of many members and leaders is one of resignation to the gradual expiration of their congregational life."*
>
> **Peter Rempel**

Evangelistic fervor: Although the Russian Mennonite Brethren also struggle with the loss of members due to emigration, they have had a bit more success in adding new members. "The 'kirchliche' have tended to be less infused with evangelistic fervor than those of Mennonite Brethren background," Peter says.

As a result of the relatively weak Mennonite presence in Russia, a Mennonite church from Germany has decided to link with Baptist churches for its mission efforts.

Peter says that Russian Baptists actually have much in common with Mennonites: "They stress community. They are accountable to each other as Christians. Discipleship is seen as a sign of salvation."

He cites how after one evangelistic campaign, some religious groups claimed there had been 7,000 decisions for Christ, while the Russian Baptists reported the number of baptisms and new members. "They are frustrated with the way some North American churches conduct their evangelistic campaigns without consulting the local churches," he says.

Based on his trip, Peter encourages COM to continue to look for ways to expand its work in Russia. Janet and Walter Bergen, who are based in Moscow, are already exploring ministry opportunities in the former Soviet Union with Mennonite Central Committee and COM. (See the story on page 5.) The Baptists have extended an invitation for Mennonites to join them in church planting.

"In the former Soviet Union, the

Peter Rempel

The last minister: *Heinrich Dyck (left) and Peter Gede*

> *"The survival of the Mennonite church is not the most important thing. The most important thing is for God's work to be done."*
>
> **Peter Rempel**

Moscow
Odessa
RUSSIA
Kiev
Zaporosh'ye
UKRAINE
Grozny
SIBERIA

Mennonite churches and believers have familial and ethnic ties to a substantial portion of the membership of the General Conference Mennonite Church," Peter says. "COM can share in the pastoral ministry to the remnant Mennonite community and support the germination of its transformation into indigenous Christian churches with Anabaptist-Mennonite orientation.

"For me, the survival of the Mennonite church is not the most important thing. The most important thing is for God's work to be done."

Carla Reimer is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Soul-giving work

You can find the latest fashions from Paris in elite stores on Tverskaya Street in Moscow. For $150, you can even enter one of many trendy rock 'n' roll clubs.

"The economic changes have been startling and sobering," says Walter Bergen. He and Janet, his wife, serve in Moscow with Mennonite Central Committee and the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"Outside the perimeter of Moscow, there are villages that look like they are emerging from the 19th century. You see elderly villagers backpacking their potatoes into the city to sell. At the same time the nouveau riche are driving Porsches on the streets of Moscow," Walter says.

As the gap widens between the rich and poor, there is more pressure on the churches, since the government has no infrastructure to deal with the problems. "One of my co-workers told me that a police officer had told someone who needed help, 'I don't care, but maybe the Baptists will care,'" Walter says. "This reality is coupled with the fact that most church members are from the lower third of the eschelon."

Still, Walter has found hope in the relationships he has formed with Evangelical Christian Baptists. They believe they are called "to be deacons in the world," he says. As a result they have a humanitarian relief program known as Compassion Ministries.

A note on a shirt: He talks about his friendship with Luba, who hands out food and money to refugees, ex-prisoners and others every day through her work with Compassion Ministries. "One day I heard her crying. Luba had just listened to the story of a refugee who was about 11 years old. The girl had been sent by train from Azerbaijan with nothing more than a note with the address of the Baptist organization pinned to her shirt. Somehow she had managed to find the office." Luba placed the girl in a children's home that receives support from Compassion Ministries.

"Luba's work is soul-giving work. Somehow in the midst of so much brokenness, she has the strength to be compassionate. She couldn't do what she is doing if she didn't have faith," Walter says.

Even though many German-speaking Mennonites are choosing to leave Russia, Walter thinks Anabaptist beliefs will have relevancy for other religious groups. For example, he says, the Russian Baptists also have a strong commitment to mutual aid.

He recalls how, when he first was looking for office space in Moscow, a staff person from Compassion Ministries was so moved by the values of MCC and COM that she started to cry. "She said, 'So many Westerners come and do projects and leave. You want to be with us. You are rare.'" *Carla Reimer*

Acts of love in the shadow of the Soviet machine

Caring for others is a radical act in the Ukraine.

Emily Will

In a single day Dr. Boris Khersonsky might write an article on cystic fibrosis for an Odessa newspaper, present a lecture on adolescent psychology to students at the social work college he directs, attend a meeting of the Odessa City Council, of which he is a member, and, as a psychiatrist, counsel an emotionally disturbed patient.

"Boris & Co.," as Florence Driedger playfully refers to Dr. Khersonsky and his colleagues, are highly competent professionals dedicated to their neighbors' welfare. They are Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) major partners in the Black Sea port city of Odessa, Ukraine.

Florence and her husband, Otto Driedger, veteran social work practitioners and professors from Regina, Sask., serve as consultants and as emotional and spiritual boosters to "Boris & Co."

One of Khersonsky's major endeavors is the Ukraine's first social work college, Socium, where the Driedgers have taught various courses and topics, such as introductory social work and social policy, during visits of up to three months throughout the past four years.

With practically no social work literature in Russian available, Socium professors depend on lectures to impart information. Students are therefore required to attend at least 75 percent of the lectures in the three-evenings-per-week, 2 1/2-year course of study, offered free of charge.

Besides teaching, the Driedgers have helped connect Odessa's lonely social work community with others involved in this work. For example, they have helped sponsor instructor and student exchanges between Socium and Canadian universities.

The Driedgers' contribution is important, says Boris, because "nobody here is experienced in social work."

"Before perestroika, the opening up of Soviet society that began in 1989, social work was absolutely forbidden in the Soviet Union. In one village, Baptists tried to assist the elderly in a project involving cultivating gardens, and the officials came in and destroyed it all," Boris says.

Contraband: Boris' career plans were also ruined by a totalitarian system bent on preventing the free flow of ideas. From a small cupboard in a Socium classroom, he pulls out samples of the "contraband" that did him in—fat, travel-dictionary-size copies of some of the world's most renowned books. The underground publications, known as "samizdat," are by writers such as Freud, Erich Fromm and Russia's own Solzhenitsyn.

During the Soviet era, Boris and other intellectual dissidents clandestinely printed such books, read and discussed them.

"In 1981, most of our library was confiscated," says Boris, who narrowly avoided imprisonment after arrest. Instead the KGB prohibited him from

Busy man: *Boris Khersonsky, one of MCC's close partners in the Ukraine, at his Odessa flat with wife, Tanya, and 10-year-old daughter, Julia.*

Howard Zehr (MCC)

teaching—just when he was finishing his dissertation and hoping to become a university professor. Another group member, a physicist, spent five years in a Soviet work camp for his involvement in this "crime," Boris says.

The graying, bearded Boris resembles an absent-minded rabbi. Most of his family was killed in the Holocaust, he says, and the rest in Stalin's work camps. Without forsaking his Jewish heritage, Boris has embraced Christianity. A collection of Ukrainian Orthodox icons adorns the family's crumbling communal apartment. Boris has become an authority on icons and appreciates them not only for the wealth of cultural heritage they represent but also as doorways to perceiving God's truth.

The preachings of an Orthodox priest on how Christianity means caring for others also exerted a strong influence on Boris' thinking, says Walter Bergen, MCC country co-representative for the former Soviet Union.

"Boris' searching for truth and beauty led him to the Scriptures, and the Scriptures led him to God," Walter says.

Rachmaninoff: With the richly textured religious paintings on the walls and strains of Rachmaninoff in the air, the Khersonkys' apartment is a haven from Odessa's dreary streets. In their three-room apartment in a communal flat—four families share kitchen, bathroom and phone—Boris, Tanya, his wife, and their two children, ages 10 and 18, open their door wide to friends, colleagues and guests.

Boris gets little rest these days. With raging inflation, the family has seen its earning power collapse in the past years. In addition to his job as cultural affairs/city government editor at one of Odessa's three daily newspapers, Boris directs and instructs at Socium, occasionally sees a private-practice psychiatry patient and recently began a part-time job as a TV news editor and commentator. These dawn-to-dusk endeavors bring in only $200 Cdn./$140 U.S. per month.

But Boris is not about to complain. Just a few years ago, during the August 1991 attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev, Boris—a vocal public supporter of Gorbachev's changes—recognized he most likely would be arrested and killed if the coup succeeded.

He recalled the advice of a famous Russian author: "If you must die, die with your favorite music in your ears." With that, Boris listened to his favorite music and went out to the city square to protest the coup.

Emily Will, who works for MCC Information Services in Akron, Pa., visited the Ukraine in November 1994.

Mennonites help war-torn Chechnya

Walter Bergen (MCC)

Relief personnel unload Mennonite Central Committee supplies at the Chechen Red Cross/Red Crescent station in Grozny, Chechnya, last spring. The two truckloads represented the first humanitarian relief to the Chechen Red Cross, says MCC worker Walter Bergen. He left a $1,000 U.S./$1,400 Cdn. grant for Chechen Red Cross work with orphans, women, children and pensioners.

Odessa's trailblazers in social work

The boys sit on a frayed couch, eyes glued to the television. So caught up are they in Disney's "Aladdin" they appear oblivious to the half-dozen visitors seated around a table next to them in the run-down basement apartment.

If the boys possessed a magic lamp, they'd wish for nothing more than a home and a loving family. But these boys do have some human "genies" working on their behalf—the caring people at the Seven Dwarfs shelter in Odessa, Ukraine.

While only 12 boys can sleep at the shelter, any homeless child may take refuge here during the day. Shelter director Dmitry Rzhepishevsky and colleague Raisa Talyas offer encouragement, activities and love to the children who come to Seven Dwarfs.

The Seven Dwarfs shelter is the only shelter available to Odessa's several hundred street children. Its mere existence is a testimony to its founders' and staff's persistence and love.

Howard Zehr (MCC)

MCC supports Seven Dwarfs and other social work initiatives in Odessa with small grants and by helping make available Florence and Otto Driedger, long-time social work practitioners and professors in Regina, Sask. The Driedgers, also supported in their outreach by the University of Regina, do not just teach social work. They provide vital encouragement and moral and spiritual support to the individuals on Odessa's social work "frontier."

The cutting edge: Dimitry and Raisa are on the cutting edge of social work in the Ukraine, says Walter Bergen, who works in the former Soviet Union with Mennonite Central Committee and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

"Under communism, the kind of work Seven Dwarfs does didn't exist because communism claimed to create the 'perfect society'," Walter says.

"The folks running Seven Dwarfs are working out the theory as they go," he says. The core of that theory is that individuals matter and should be treated compassionately—"an alternative to the giantism of large, dehumanizing Soviet institutions," he says. *Emily Will*

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Alexander N. Mokhovikov and Alla Povezinnova help people through their suicide hotline.

The Ukraine's suicide rate is one of the world's highest. For the Ukraine as a whole, with a population of some 55 million, the suicide rate ranges from 40 to 50 per 100,000 but soars to 800 to 1,000 per 100,000 in the Kiev region, site of the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe, says Dr. Alexander N. Mokhovikov.

"People are despairing. They've been lied to, their homes and land have been poisoned. Their children are sick, and promised medical care is just another empty promise," says Walter Bergen, who works in the former Soviet Union with Mennonite Central Committee and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Alexander directs a crisis line for people in emotional anguish, perhaps contemplating suicide. Odessa's "Confidence Telephone Service" is another fledgling social service MCC helps support through small cash grants and Florence and Otto Dreidger's work as consultants and encouragers.

The heart of "Confidence" is a simple room in the middle of a spacious but crumbling basement. Set up here are single beds where the night's two volunteers can stretch out and relax as they take calls from people in distress from 7 p.m. to 9 a.m.

In 1993, Confidence received some 7,000 calls on its two lines. Alexander says the Ukraine's difficult economic situation, loneliness and isolation fostered by communism contribute to individuals feeling in crisis and in need of a listening ear. Lenin considered charity "the most detestable of human shortcomings," he says.

"Because we have no social services infrastructure, we must work with a very trained staff," Alexander says. Conversations are lengthy, some up to two hours, since the telephone counselor may be the only help available to the caller. *Emily Will*

Help from believers' hands

Igor and Tamara Keyschun experience the care of Christians through gifts they receive at the hospital.

Emily Will

Christian faith is of paramount importance to Igor and Tamara Keyschun, a young couple living in Zaporosh'ye, an industrial city in the Ukraine.

Their faith defined them even when Christian observance was forbidden under Communist rule. Tamara's father and Igor's grandfather, who were friends, both spent long years in Soviet prisons because they would not renounce their faith. Igor himself, as a Christian, was prohibited from attending Soviet institutions of higher learning, either technical school or university.

Because their faith is central to their lives, the couple was especially pleased to receive a layette set from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), which to them represents the wider global church. "I'm grateful when assistance goes from believers' hands directly to the person needing it," bypassing impersonal institutions, says Tamara.

The couple received a layette set two years ago when their second child, Raymond, was about to be born. Their daughter Julia is 4.

"We had no money to buy clothes for our newborn, so the layette set was terribly valuable to us," says Tamara. The Keyschuns attend Pavlo Kischkas Baptist Church, where Tamara also serves as assistant choir director.

From 1992 through 1994, MCC provided 2,328 layette sets, which were valued at $23,300 U.S./$31,700 Cdn., to Ukrainian Baptists.

Church women distribute the layette sets not only to churchgoers but to women in local hospitals.

Giving birth can be expensive, especially now with the Ukraine's economic deterioration. Besides clothes for the baby and herself, the mother must take along all needed hospital supplies, even bedding and medicines.

Today families spend almost all they have on food, say the Keyschuns. Since the fall of communism, factories have closed and inflation has run wild.

Telephone operator: Igor, a machinist, earns the equivalent of $15 U.S./ $20 Cdn. per month when the factory is operating. Tamara was a telephone operator who earned between $2 and $3 U.S. monthly, so little it was not worth keeping the job. Fortunately the church is able to employ Igor in church construction while the factory is idle. Igor also serves as a deacon in the church.

As needed as infant clothes are, "the church women's visits to other women in hospitals were as valued as the layettes," says Walter Bergen, who works in the former Soviet Union with MCC and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

"Hospitals here are impersonal. They're dungeons, often without light and heat, much less food or soap. If women travel in from outlying areas, they go through the trauma of birth and recovery alone," Walter says. "Doctors and nurses are underpaid, overworked and often surly. Visits from church women end up being the only 'humane' contact many women have during the birthing experience.

"Some women have started going to church because of the kindness experienced after giving birth by women from churches who came with the layette kits."

Emily Will visited the Ukraine in November 1994.

"Hospitals here are impersonal. They're dungeons, often without light and heat, much less food or soap."

Walter Bergen

Howard Zehr (MCC)

Christian care in the hospital: *Igor and Tamara Keyschun*

Letters

THANKS FOR *THE MENNONITE*

This is another "Thanks for *The Mennonite*" letter. I grew up in a Mennonite community, attended a Mennonite college and still am a member of a Mennonite congregation. My family and I now live in a community where there is no Mennonite church within a four-hour drive. We have always missed the Mennonite church, but after a patriotic Fourth of July celebration (during the worship service) at the church we now attend, I am truly thankful for *The Mennonite.* It reminds us that some Mennonite congregations celebrated Peace Sunday (instead of singing "The Star-Spangled Banner") on July 2. It also keeps us informed of other happenings in the larger Mennonite church. I thank you, and I read every inch I can of each issue. *The Mennonite* helps encourage me to hold fast to my pacifist beliefs. *Laurie Yost, Pinetop, Ariz.*

LETTER FROM PRISON

I've had a difficult time here in prison. I was moved from the minimum security prison at Conners to a lower security center in Ardmore, Okla. They placed me next to guys who were drunk and used other drugs. They asked me if I smoked weed. I'd been telling myself for some time that I would be able to handle just smoking pot. I started on a downward spiral.

I followed my will for over a year. Now I've led myself back up to minimum security with people on my back and making my life difficult. A guy with a lot of money wanted me to get him weed. I wouldn't do it, and he told me he would make my life a living hell. He did. I ended up with a broken nose, hurt pride and many enemies I didn't need.

In spite of all these problems, God has blessed me and watched over me, even though I turned my back on him. Not only am I back in a treatment center, but it's drug free. A Mennonite church has services here every other Thursday. I finally get to go to a Mennonite service. I can't wait.

When I get to thinking about my old ways, I need to pray, ask for God's help. I need to study God's Word daily, or I will slip further away from him.

Please don't think your magazines have been a waste. I've read each one. I am still touched by each edition. I'm in the process of rereading the ones that I've got with me and I'm having my mother bring back the ones I've sent home.

I ask that you also forgive me for my weaknesses and please continue my subscription. In spite of my wrongs, you and the Mennonite magazines you have so graciously sent me have helped more than you will ever know. *Wayne Woltman, William S. Key Correction Center, Fort Supply, Okla.*

SUPPORT FUND FOR PRISONERS

Some time ago our Sunday school class, which has been using *The Mennonite* as a resource for discussion, took up a collection and decided that a portion of it should go to the Prisoners Gift Subscription Fund. Please apply the enclosed check to the fund. *Ken Von Gunten, Pleasant Oaks Church, Middlebury, Ind.*

Editor's note: *Contributions to this fund may be sent to* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

INSIGHTS ON MEDIATION

Thanks to *The Mennonite* (June 27 issue, page 14) reporting that it had received three honorable mentions [from the Associated Church Press], I sought out an article that tweaked my curiosity, "When Bad Fights Happen in Good Churches" by Larry Penner (Aug. 23, 1994).

Not only does the article provide a good snapshot of a resolution game plan and says restoration is possible after conflict, but it brazenly states that "conflict is necessary for growth."

The next article illustrates how mediation can help give birth to a multifaceted peace well beyond expectation, and this with a rape case, a subject many within victim-support circles believe to be beyond restorative justice.

The third article provides a reflective and rational close-up on premeditated murder—capital punishment style. Not solely on the effects on the accused but some well-deserved focus on the rest of us as well.

Jonah's honest, post-whale reflection indicates that he did not want God to extend forgiveness to the Ninevites. This same insight is also expressed by

HOW CAN I WORK FOR PEACE IF I PAY FOR WAR?

[Former U.S.] Secretary of State [Alexander] Haig said about anti-war protesters, "Let them demonstrate all they want as long as they pay their taxes."

If by day I worked as a drug counselor telling kids not to take drugs, and if by night I dealt drugs to the same kids, I would be a hypocrite. But no more so than working for peace while paying for war.

Is paying for soldiers to murder less evil than pulling the trigger myself?

Over half of every income-tax dollar goes for war—past, present and future. I keep my easily traceable taxable income under the taxable level—in the U.S. for a sighted, under-65-year-old person the taxable level is $6,400 for 1995.

I have no microwave oven, no TV, no computer, no car, no big house. I prize living the truth as best I see it far more than owning unnecessary, expensive possessions.

If someone came to my door collecting money for a local gang to rob, torture, terrorize, poison and kill my neighbors, would I donate? The U.S. military robs, tortures, terrorizes, poisons and kills far more people than all the street gangs, drug dealers, bank robbers and Mafia combined.

In order for the United States or any other empire to plunder and massacre, two things are required from many citizens—silence and paying taxes. For 16 years I have paid no federal income tax, and I am not silent. I say, Not with my money, not with my silence, not in my name. *Don Schrader, Albuquerque, N.M.*

the rape victim's husband. He acknowledges his preference for vengeance was made visible to him only after his wife took steps to make peace with the rapist.

Refusing to accept that there is an interdependence between capital punishment (deliberated murder) and our own cycles of violence is similarly driven. Contrary to the unstated notion that society is demographically cleansed of evil by incarcerating or executing (permanent banishment?), these "cleansing" actions, not unlike ethnic cleansing, may actually solidify spin-off cycles of violence among those of us remaining. Violent solutions enslave us to further cycles of violence.

I had not seen this causal connection so clearly concerning the desensitized expression, "capital punishment" and further cycles of violence. I thank *The Mennonite* for bringing these older articles to my attention by simply noting that an honorable mention had been received from the Associated Church Press. *Eduard Hiebert, Headingley, Man.*

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?

I attended the dialogue on homosexuality at Wichita '95 and I appreciated the spirit of love and respect there. Bernie Wiebe's guidance of the session as moderator was excellent.

With the woman caught in adultery Jesus was kind, compassionate and merciful. Jesus would undoubtedly do the same to each of us, including the homosexual person. After showing the woman kindness, compassion and mercy, Jesus called the woman to turn away from adultery and turn to a new life.

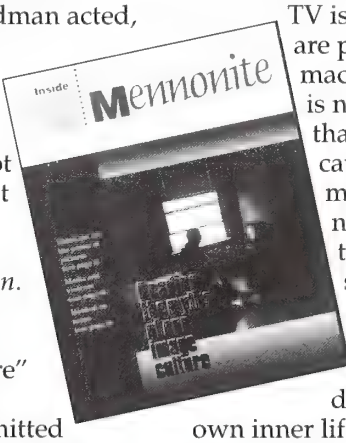
Jesus would not be forceful, cold or judgmental toward homosexuals, but would he call them to turn away from homosexuality to a new life? That seems to be one of the central questions. *Dave Waldowski, Sioux Falls, S.D.*

MENNONITES AND MEDIA

We agree with Larry Penner's editorial "No More Spongy Mennonites" (Aug. 8 issue) that we should be more careful not to be overcome by the media.

But I'm surprised that you also became a victim of TV when they picture only how the law officials had stopped Rodney King. The media "grossly misrepresented" when they cut out the long part [of the video showing] how a drunk madman acted, which brought on the siege (this according to a close friend who sat in on the jury).

Ought we Mennonites not rather focus on getting right with God and how to stay right with God? *Harold Klassen, Mountain Lake, Minn.*



Your issue on "Reading the Myths of Our Image Culture" (Aug. 8) offered some good ideas but, strangely, you omitted the one approach to television that to me seems the most obvious: Get rid of it.

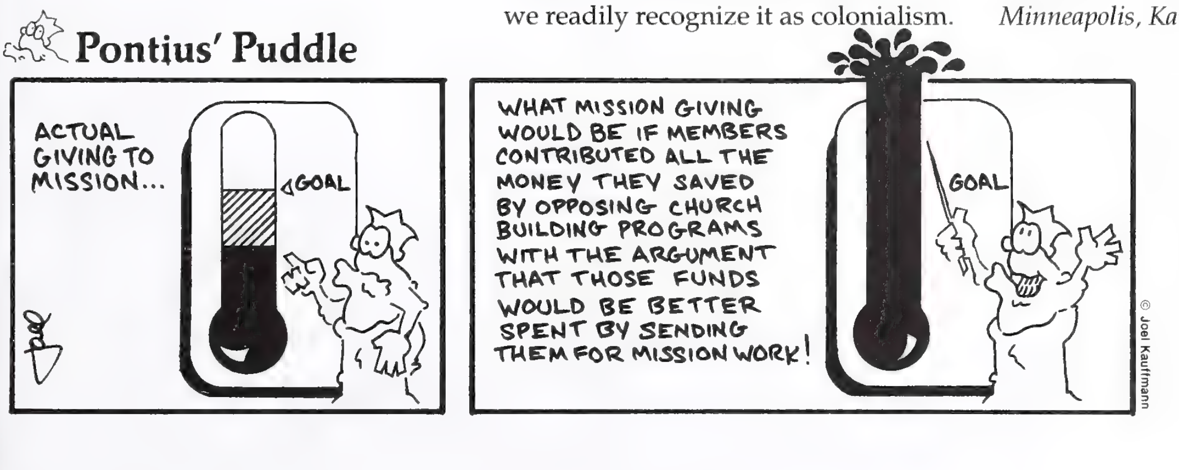
It has been nearly six years now that I have lived without TV. TV abstinence initially was not something I freely chose; it was forced on me by circumstances. After a few months without TV, however, I realized that I enjoyed my newfound freedom. I'm talking not only about the increase in my free time—after all, time spent in front of a TV is time not spent reading a good book, building friendships or enjoying the outdoors—but also a new mental freedom.

When the United States meddles in the affairs of Third World countries, we readily recognize it as colonialism. But we seem to have trouble calling TV what it is: colonialism of the mind. Because there are so many channels to choose from now, we're fooled into thinking that TV watching offers diversity. We fail to see what would be obvious to an observer in outer space, namely that on any given evening in the United States at least 100 million of us are engaged in exactly the same activity: passively sitting in front of a tube, letting our minds be imprinted with images of someone else's choosing.

Television's power over us is insidious, and I realize this most intensely when I visit someone's house where a TV is on. Our conversations are poor, and no real intimacy is possible. I think it is no exaggeration to say that one of the biggest causes of family disharmony today is television, not just because of the trashy content of most shows but, more importantly, because of the TV set itself and its awesome power to distract us—from our own inner life and from the human beings closest to us. In my experience, television—even if it is "quality" programming—deadens the soul.

Your list of resources on media had several glaring omissions. The classic must-reads on the subjects are *The Plug-In Drug* by Marie Winn and, most important, the brilliant and visionary *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* by Jerry Mander.

I noticed that all the books on your list were provided by a single clearinghouse. I would suggest, alternatively, that people get Mander's book—it's probably available at your local library—and consult his bibliography for a more complete list of resources on television. *Kathy Collmer, Minneapolis, Kan.*

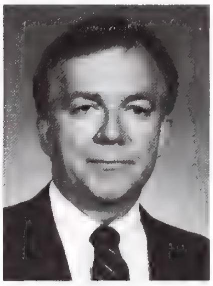

Pontius' Puddle
ACTUAL GIVING TO MISSION...
GOAL
WHAT MISSION GIVING WOULD BE IF MEMBERS CONTRIBUTED ALL THE MONEY THEY SAVED BY OPPOSING CHURCH BUILDING PROGRAMS WITH THE ARGUMENT THAT THOSE FUNDS WOULD BE BETTER SPENT BY SENDING THEM FOR MISSION WORK!
GOAL
© Joel Kauffmann

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Send letters to* **The Mennonite**, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, e-mail CompuServe 72147,2746.*

Why do we give to charity?

A new study tells us who gives to charity and why.

J.B. Miller



J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Churches and nonprofit organizations spend a lot of time thinking and talking about how they can get people to give more. In today's financial environment few charities can survive without gifts from their donors. Educational institutions develop plans for how to tap into their alumni base more effectively; mission programs set strategies to focus on former workers; others look for ways to engage volunteers and board members. In fact, some organizations place people on their boards in hopes of getting donations from them.

What leads people to give to some organizations and not others? Experts have written much about donor motivation. A recent study conducted by the Russ Reid Company and Barna Research Group sought to answer these basic questions:

1. Who gives to nonprofit organizations?
2. What motivates them?
3. How can they be motivated to give even more?

The study focused on donors in the general population who donated money to nonprofit organizations other than a church or place of worship in the previous 12 months.

Past studies have shown that people's giving patterns relate to the intensity and nature of their spiritual commitment. Another part of the study found that 82 percent of people who give to nonprofit organizations also give to churches or other places of worship.

Fund-raisers seem to think the best potential donor is elderly. This study shows otherwise. Twenty-four percent of all donors are in their 40s, and 26 percent are in their 30s, about the same as for people in their 50s. Giving patterns actually decline for people in their 60s and 70s. Maybe the Baby Boomers and the younger population are not as selfish as some people think.

Religious faith: Most donors give to religious organizations, and the survey showed most respondents as active in their religion. Sixty percent attended a religious service in the past month, and 84 percent agree that religious faith is very important in their lives.

And it isn't just that people who give to their local religious center are more likely to donate to other nonprofits; they also give more money. Annual giving by religious people to nonprofits other than their church averages $196, 13 percent more than the national yearly average of $173, and 66 percent more than the nonreligious giver's average of $118. People who described themselves as Christian evangelicals are the most generous, donating an average of $256 annually.

Who are the most generous? Those who have named nonprofits as beneficiaries in their wills. They report giving $558 annually, on average, almost 400 percent more than the national average.

While 56 percent of those who responded reported they had a will or estate plan, only 8 percent had included nonprofit groups in their wills. A similar 8 percent named a church or place of worship.

What motivates donors to give? Here are three compelling reasons:

1. The nature of the cause itself. The donor supports what the organization is about.
2. The knowledge that the organization spends donor dollars carefully and wisely.
3. Evidence that the organization is effective in its work.

While these motivators may not be surprising, what was interesting was the type of nonprofits people supported in the past year. Seventy percent gave to programs that worked in areas of handicapped assistance, the most popular category. The next categories, each at 45 percent, were health-care and environmental organizations. Educational institutions were further down at 34 percent, and political parties were at 19 percent.

People give to a broad range of organizations, and a surprising fact was that sometimes the same people support organizations that seem to be in conflict with each other. For example, 35 percent of donors to Operation Rescue, a highly vocal and visible anti-abortion group, also give to Planned Parenthood, which has the reputation of being pro-choice.

> **Our congregations are still the best place to teach generous giving, giving beyond the offering plate to nonprofits that are important to us.**

What can we learn from this study? There are two things:

1. Our congregations are still the best place to teach generous giving, giving beyond the offering plate to nonprofits that are important to us.
2. It is critical that our nonprofits market their missions to the public. Our organizations must get better at telling their stories. We are past the time when our donors will give just because it is a Mennonite organization. We have to communicate the cause we are about. Donors want to hear that story.

While this study was not targeted toward Mennonites, my experience tells me that many of these patterns are the same. I know that our people are generous, whether they are rich or poor. Our church's teachings on stewardship and generosity result in gifts to nonprofits that enable these institutions to make significant contributions to the community and the world. We must continue to build on that legacy.

a Common Place

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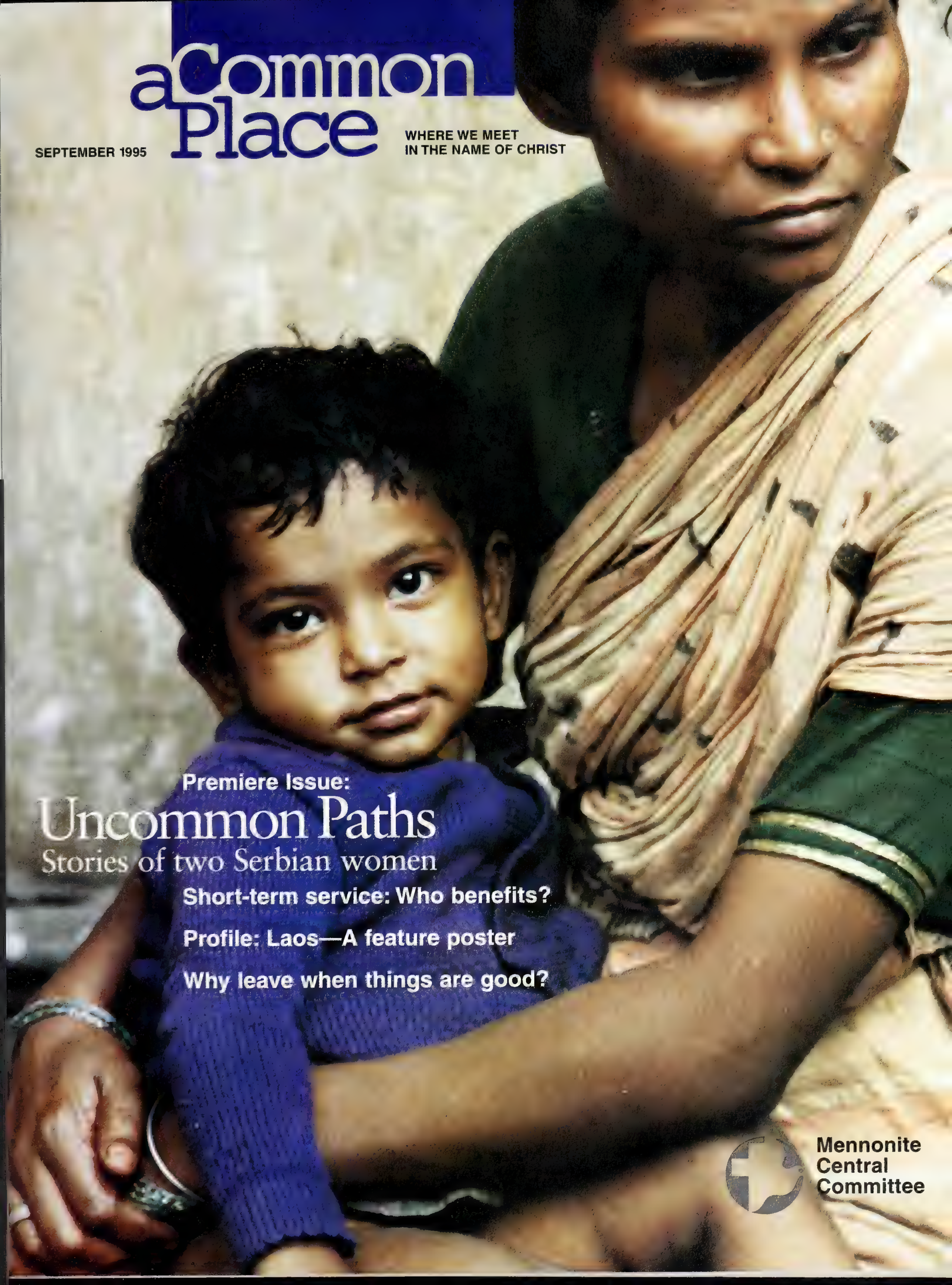
SEPTEMBER 1995

WHERE WE MEET
IN THE NAME OF CHRIST



Premiere Issue:

Uncommon Paths

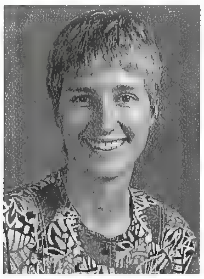
Stories of two Serbian women

Short-term service: Who benefits?

Profile: Laos—A feature poster

Why leave when things are good?

Mennonite
Central
Committee



Tourists or Pilgrims?

by Deborah Fast

What are you seeking—
are you tourists or pilgrims?
(Indian theologian Kondothra M. George)

Reading *a Common Place* may take you in many directions. But finding a common place with those you encounter, meeting the faces behind the facts, may be your destination. We hope to help you share in a pilgrimage. Don't settle for a tourist's view of the people around you—in a neighboring community, or a country you have only heard about. In these pages, meet MCC volunteers, their friends and co-workers, and find out the issues these people face. Learn about the common experiences we all share.

Not all of us can leave home to live in a distant place. We may travel as tourists. But perhaps pilgrimage is more about *how* we live than where we go. Jesus modelled openness to God's leading: "...do not worry about your life... Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" (Matt. 6:25).

But where does a pilgrimage mind-set take us? How can we travel with others who suffer as they search for a better life? Where do we find a "common place" with people who might seem very different from us?

James Logan (page 11) cautions against "get-to-know-the-ghetto tours," yet Stephen Penner reminds us that for some people, a brief encounter becomes a life-changing event (page 11). Dan and Wilma Wiens (page 6) say they became more spiritually sensitive because of friends in Swaziland. Amy Tripp (page 14) describes her bond of trust with a street boy. Charles Hurst and Maria Smith (page 2) relate their experience of God's love through Nicaraguan and Salvadoran friends. Finding a common place may mean being open to the unexpected. Beba Varga and Jasmina Tosich (page 4) were far from the church (and wanted it that way), but now lead a Christian ministry to refugees.

Sharing life's journey with others is a pilgrimage. Let's find a common place along the way. ■

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) received the following letter in April 1995. We print it in *a Common Place* with the authors' permission.

Dear Friends,
The enclosed check is part of our withheld tax money. We would like to re-direct this money to the Laos Bombie Project.

God bless,
Charles Hurst and Maria Smith

(attached to above letter)

April 15, 1995
Internal Revenue Service

Dear Friends,
Enclosed is our 1995 Federal Income Tax Return. We have withheld approximately 40 percent—the portion that funds military and military-related programs. We have done this for several years, and instead give this money to groups or projects that bring healing for our world—through peacemaking, justice and relieving hunger and suffering.

We deeply believe that God calls us to this action. It is against our religious convictions for our tax dollars to support the military establishment.

God calls us to peace. Violence is overcome only when we acknowledge its power and actively resist it.

We walked among people in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatamala. We remember the suffering they experienced because of our government's trust in military solutions to complex social, economic and political problems.

The human race must find better ways to resolve conflicts and differences.

Charles V. Hurst and Maria A. Smith
Cleveland, OH

What do you think?

We want to hear from you. Please send your comments, questions, beefs and bouquets to Editor, *a Common Place* via:

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Please include your name and address. Letters may be edited for length.

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MCC'S WORLD WIDE WEB HOMEPAGE ADDRESS
http://www.mennonitecc.ca/mcc/

"a Common Place" invites readers to meet the people MCC workers have come to know, and to search for the strength and hope we share as children of God. "a Common Place" promises readers an honest look at life on the edge of survival, trustworthy information about the events of our world and practical ways of working together to make a difference.

"a Common Place" is published by the Mennonite Central Committee, a relief, service and community development agency that strives for peace, justice and the dignity of all people by sharing its experiences, resources and faith in Jesus Christ. Our point of view is shaped by the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ faith tradition and some 900 workers serving in 50 countries in food production, health, education, job creation, refugee assistance and conciliation. MCC is sponsored by the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America.

a Common Place

September 1995 Insert

features

4 Uncommon paths to an unpopular cause

Refugees in Belgrade are often "unwelcome foreigners." But Beba Varga and Jasmina Tosich, at Bread of Life, offer hospitality. The remarkable stories of two Serbian women. *By Emily Will*

7 Profile: Laos

Laos is a land of beauty and of lingering pain. The end of the Vietnam War more than 20 years ago didn't stop the killing. A feature poster. *Compiled by Pearl Sensenig*

11 **Let's talk** Short-term service: Who benefits?

Short-term service is increasingly popular. Does it inspire a longer commitment? What is the effect on the host community? James Logan and Stephen Penner debate. *By Andrea Schrock Wenger*

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15 **Make a difference**

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On the cover: **Not all of us have a chance to meet people like this Indian woman and her son. MCC workers throughout the world share the lives and the stories of others. Read about them in *a Common Place*. MCC photo by Howard Zehr.**

a Common Place is published as an insert in March and September, and as a second class publication in January, May, July and November by Mennonite Central Committee, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500. Editor-in-chief is Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker. Editor is Deborah Fast. Design Consultant is Dale William Shidler. Production Assistant is Michael Eby-Good. Art Director is Judith Rempel Smucker. Subscription available at no cost upon request.

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Uncommon paths to an

Given their backgrounds, Beba Varga and Jasmina Tosich make unlikely candidates to lead a Christian ministry to Bosnian refugees. Beba, the daughter of a communist family, studied philosophy, "looking for God in my head and in books." Jasmina attended church in her teens, but eventually became cynical. These two women head Bread of Life, a ministry to "unwelcome foreigners" in Belgrade. Bread of Life supplies 1,500 families with a monthly food parcel, but more importantly, with a welcome.

What paths did these women travel to arrive working for this unpopular cause?

Jasmina Tosich and Beba Varga are close friends as well as co-workers. Jasmina calls Beba "my spiritual mother."

Jasmina

Jasmina Tosich was a teen-ager when she defied her parents' opposition and attended a Baptist church in Belgrade. Christians were not understood or respected during the former Yugoslavia's communist rule.

Jasmina and other church young people formed an intentional community. "We wanted a church like the church in Acts," she says. "We wanted to be a Christian body that supported one another."

They lived in the Baptist church for three months. "It was a fiasco. We argued with each other all the time," Jasmina relates with a hearty laugh.

It was not funny at the time, though. The experience made Jasmina and others cynical about the church.

The crossroads came in 1989, with an opportunity to attend Bible school and visit churches in England. Jasmina found them alive.

"I was the only young person left in my church but I was angry and disappointed. My experience in England healed my anger. When I came back I was different. I was ready to be used."

Jasmina already had a firm friendship with Beba Varga, developed while Jasmina lived with Beba's family and babysat the children.

Through Beba, Jasmina learned how to relate to her parents, "instead of running away from them, something I was very skillful at."

When political problems began in the former Yugoslavia, both Jasmina and Beba lost their jobs with a Slovenian-owned firm. Jasmina knew church

Refugees gather outside the Bread of Life office at Belgrade's Pentecostal Church.

unpopular cause

By Emily Will
MCC Photos by
Howard Zehr

> **"I was the only young person left in my church, but I was angry and disappointed. My experience in England healed my anger. When I came back I was different. I was ready to be used."**
> ***—Jasmina Tosich***

members had begun to assist refugees. She and Beba prayed for them but Jasmina did not want to become involved. Her teen-age experience with intentional community had soured her on "anything communitarian." Prayer changed her mind, however, and she began working for Bread of Life in 1992.

"Since then, my dream about a community such as in Acts has come true," she relates. "We are working together and supporting one another, and not just living in our own little communities."

Beba

Beba Varga was a teen-ager when her family moved to Venezuela. Her father served there as Yugoslavia's ambassador. Then in 1968, at age 20, she fell gravely ill with cancer. After two years, Beba had wasted to 40 kg/88 lbs. and the family returned to Yugoslavia so she could die at home.

There Beba met a Pentecostal woman who gave her a Bible and invited her to church. During the service the pastor offered to lay hands on people who were ill.

Beba describes that experience with blissful eyes. "I felt heat go through me, as if I were in the sun. Afterwards I was wet with sweat and inside I felt a happiness."

The following day, she relates, the cancerous lesion on her leg closed; over several months she gradually regained strength and health.

Physically healed, Beba faced a great inner struggle. She had made a covenant that if cured, she would follow Christ. But having studied philosophy, Beba was used to theoretical discussions about God. "The person I was could not understand what had happened to me," Beba says.

And Christians had a bad name in the former Yugoslavia. Only old women went to church, Beba says. Others who embraced Christianity were seen as traitors or spies.

Beba, though, began to read the Bible and came to accept the power that had healed her. Beba's father was not prepared to lose her to the church. "He kicked me out of the house; he would have preferred me dead," she relates.

Beba adds that she could understand her father's ideas, having shared them herself.

"Five months ago my father told me, 'Your God is the real God,'" Beba relates. "But I always knew my family would follow my path. Now they are all Christians." She did not mind waiting 25 years for her father to change his mind.

Daily prayer undergirds Beba's demanding work. "I love God very much because God gave me physical and spiritual life. When I was sick I saw that life was very, very important and I grabbed hold of it," Beba says.

> **"I was looking for God in my head and in books. The person I was could not understand what had happened to me."**
> ***—Beba Varga***

Although sharing with refugees and listening to their tragic stories can at times seem overwhelming, Beba says, "I did not look for this work; God gave it to me. And if God gives me this work, God also gives me the strength to do it." ■

Beyond the news: Hope for Bosnia, **a 30-minute video, goes "behind the lines" to meet peacemakers, including Bread of Life staff, active in reconciliation, service, witness and praying for their enemies in the former Yugoslavia. Contact your nearest MCC office for a free loan (see page 15).**

Emily Will is a writer and editor in MCC's Communications department.

Why leave when things are good?

Wilma, Dan, their son Chad and the dog. MCC photo by John Longhurst.

Things are going well for Dan and Wilma Wiens. They have a nice home in the country. Their farming business is successful. Dan is invited by governments and universities to consult on agriculture issues. Their four children are happy, and the cat just had kittens.

So why are they leaving it all to go to Haiti for five years with MCC?

It's not as if they haven't "done their bit" already. From 1986 to '89 they served with MCC in Swaziland where Dan taught agriculture and Wilma worked at a preschool and church center. Why go overseas again?

"I guess it's because we don't think we've learned all we need to about God and how to live," says Dan.

But isn't it supposed to be the other way around—don't North Americans go overseas to teach and help others? That wasn't Dan and Wilma's experience in Africa.

I guess it's because we don't think we've learned all we need to about God and how to live.

"One week into our assignment, I realized I was the one needing to be taught," says Dan. "I was the one who needed saving."

Wilma adds, "Our friends in Swaziland were very aware of God's presence in their lives. Through meeting them we became more spiritually sensitive."

Dan, 35, and Wilma, 32, didn't just learn more about God during their time in Swaziland. The experience also affected how they now earn a living. Although Dan was able to teach effective agricultural practices, he was impressed by the way people farmed. He and Wilma decided to try the same method in Canada.

"Here in North America farming is an industry," says Dan. "There is no connection between the people who grow the food and those who buy it. But in Swaziland farming is more people-related. People know where their food comes from; they know the farmer."

Three years after returning to southern Manitoba, Dan and Wilma started Twin Creek Shared Farm, one of the first in western Canada. Through shared farming, city dwellers purchase shares in local farms; in return they get fresh, organically grown produce.

Participants share in the bounty, but they also share the risk. If the weather is unfavorable, they get less produce.

"It's a way for consumers to learn more about how farming works," says Dan, adding that it's "a more community-minded system. Some of our customers have become our best friends."

Today their 15-acre farm provides food for 77 sharers or share groups, and supplies produce to three grocery stores and a co-op.

Even though Dan and Wilma look forward to their assignments in Haiti, the decision to go was not easy. "God didn't wake us up one night and say 'I want you to go to Haiti,'" says Dan. "But we have felt affirmed in this decision."

Dan and Wilma agreed to go overseas again only if they could both use their gifts, and if there was a good school for their children—Joshua, Malyssa, Cora and Chad.

"All our prayers were answered," Wilma says, adding that family and friends have been supportive. They admit to concerns about political instability and personal security in Haiti. "But we believe God wants us there," says Dan.

After all, who knows what God wants to teach them this time? ■

John Longhurst is a communications staff person with MCC Canada, based in Winnipeg, Man.

Children at risk: ເດັກນ້ອຍກໍ່ຄືເດັກນ້ອຍນັ້ນແຫຼະ

(Kids will be kids)

When the boys spotted a ball-like object in the ditch, they began daring one another to hurl rocks at it—with deadly consequence. The bomblet exploded, killing one of them instantly.

In Laos, as in North America, if you tell a child to leave something alone, that object becomes irresistible. Unfortunately, Laos is littered with hundreds of thousands of live Vietnam War era bomblets that are becoming increasingly unstable.

Two of Mrs. Tu Va Chao's children were killed when they picked up a bomb that exploded. Now she, like many other parents, lives with painful memories. She recalls her son's dream of attending nursery school, her daughter's new blouse never worn, young lives snuffed out.

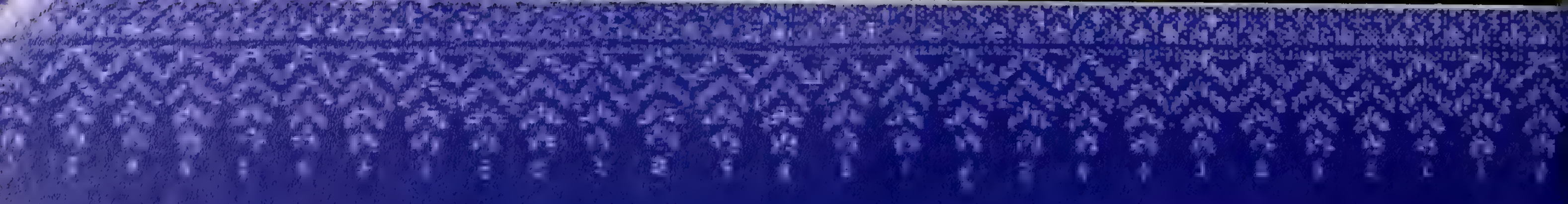
The first ever systematic accident survey of northeastern Laos has revealed that children make up almost half—44 percent—of the victims. The survey, conducted by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Mines Advisory Group (MAG), is part of an ongoing effort to clear bombs from villages, schools and fields, and to introduce a system for marking unexploded ordnance.

Over the past year, the MCC/MAG program has trained Lao de-miners to clear more than seven school sites and to travel to dozens of villages to safely explode bombs people have placed in bomb craters, under bushes or in other out-of-the-way places. ■

"I found several bomblets. I told the village Chief as I was instructed." ***—Bouasone***

"I was tending the water buffalo when I found a lot of bombs."***—Ahate***

Pull-out section ▶▶▶

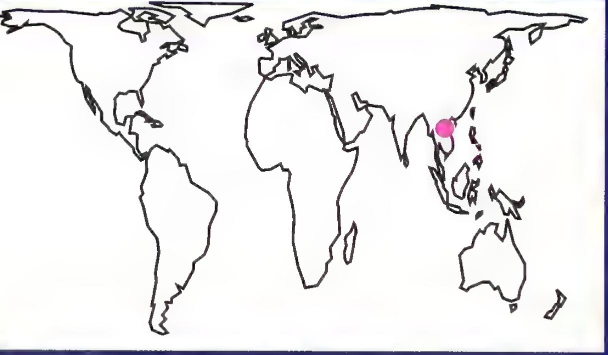


PROFILE:

Population:	4.7 million
Land size:	94, 400 square miles 236,000 square kilometers
Per capita income:	$250 U.S.
Life expectancy:	49 years
Literacy rate:	
male:	65 percent
female:	35 percent

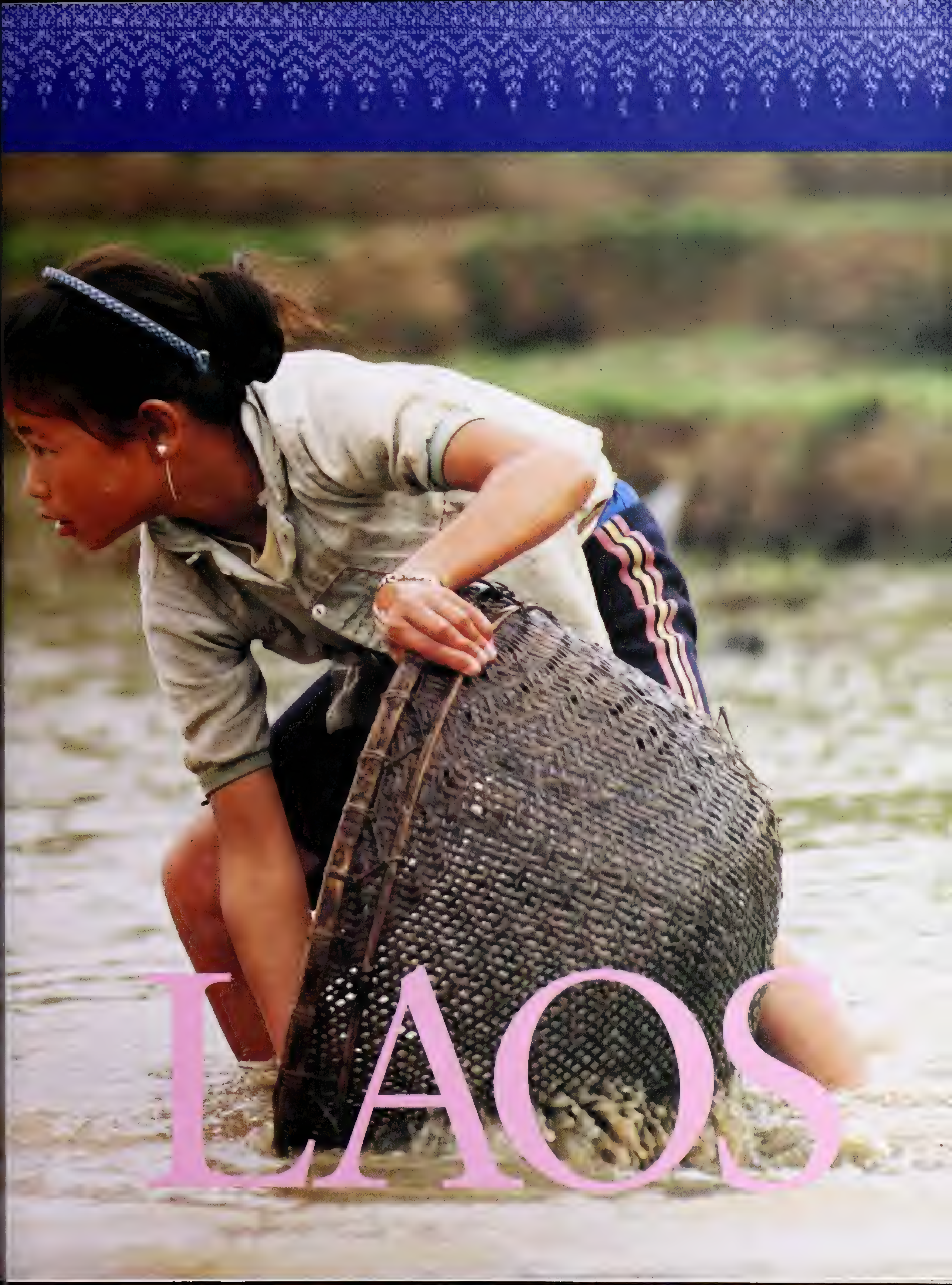
MCC has worked in Laos since 1975; in addition to clearing unexploded ordnance from northeastern Laos, the MCC program includes health, agriculture, other development projects and periodic emergency assistance.

SELFHELP Crafts, an MCC program, markets Lao cloth and baskets in North America, helping artisans preserve traditions and earn income.



Rice paddies supply more than rice. This young woman uses a basket-like net to gather fish, frogs, shrimp and crabs.

All poster photos by Howard Zehr.



LAOS

"Now when we go to the forest to look for bamboo shoots or to collect firewood and find a bomb, we mark it for the de-mining team." Kham Me, on her way to work in the family rice field.

Nanou Village, home to 94 families, is set in the rolling mountains of northeastern Laos. U.S. planes dumped more than 2 million tons of bombs on Laos during the Vietnam War. MCC/MAG de-miners traveled to Nanou in January 1995 and safely exploded 447 pieces of surface ordnance, including 272 bomblets, known in Laos as "bombies," 127 artillery shells, seven mortars and 44 miscellaneous items such as grenades and rockets.

"We feel much safer now. Before, people of this village tried to dispose of bombs themselves." Amka Sisombath, head of Nanou Village.

"I'm afraid of bombs and am glad for the de-mining project." Sae notified MCC/MAG staff of a mortar he discovered while digging sludge from an irrigation ditch.

SAFE VILLAGES CAMPAIGN

You, your church, school or family can help make life safer for Laotians by sponsoring bomb clearing in a designated village.

Over the past 20-plus years, Laotians have, at great risk, cleared their fields and villages by picking up bombs and other live ordnance and placing them in ravines, under bushes or in other out-of-the-way places. As time passes, the bombs are disintegrating and becoming increasingly dangerous. Now bomb technicians, supported by MCC and Mines Advisory Group, are traveling from village to village safely exploding these items.

Call your nearest MCC office (see page 15) to "adopt" a village. You will receive:

- information about life in "your" village, including a list of bomb-related accidents that have occurred there
- suggestions for prayer, advocacy and fund-raising

Clearing costs $1,100 Cdn./$800 U.S. per day. Bomb technicians spend an average of five days in a village.

"Before the village was cleared of bombs we were afraid—afraid the playing children would get hurt." Vanh makes rice noodles to sell at a nearby market.

Pearl Sensenig is a writer and editor in MCC's Communications department.

◀◀◀ Pull-out section

Short term service: Who benefits?

by Andrea Schrock Wenger

"So many Westerners come, do projects and leave. You want to be with us. You are rare," said a Compassion Ministries staff person recently to MCC worker Walter Bergen in Moscow. MCC's colleagues in the former Soviet Union and other places often affirm the longer-term presence of MCC workers, who typically serve for at least three years. But how can MCC ensure an ongoing supply of these workers when fewer people seem willing or able to make such a commitment? Many are convinced that short-term service programs—from a week to three months—are the answer, whetting people's appetite for longer-term service. James Logan, MCC U.S. Community Ministries coordinator, and Stephen Penner, West Coast MCC director, view the issue differently.

Question: Are you convinced that people in Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches want more short-term service options?

SP: Youth in MCC's supporting churches do seem to be looking for short-term service options. Watch what they are already doing: outreach in their communities at places like retirement centers, picking up pop cans, volunteering in their church nurseries. They are also interested in service—or mission work—outside their communities. It's not a groundswell, but we do receive numerous requests for one-week to three-month service terms.

Stephen Penner

JL: I agree. It looks like young people are asking for more short-term options. MCC short-term programs like PLOW (Portland Learning Outreach and Worship) and SWAP (Sharing With Appalachian People) are growing.

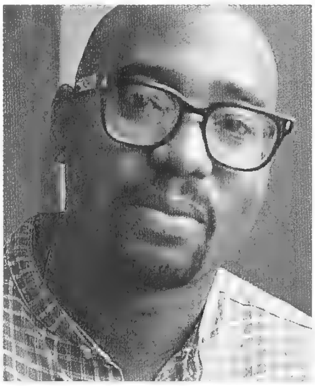
Why? Parents are encouraging their children to serve as a way to prepare for long-term church work. Youth are attracted by the chance to get away from home, experience something exotic and have an adventure.

SP: I agree. Youth want to experience something exotic and feel that service is part of what it means to be a Christian. It's a practical way of sharing ourselves with others. Our youth leaders would say you can teach more effectively and have more life-changing experiences when you get out of your normal environment.

Q: What experience have you had with short-term service? How do you react to the idea of MCC starting more short-term programs?

JL: I currently administer SWAP, MCC's largest short-term program. But most of my experience was as a recipient of the "goodness" of short-term volunteers coming in and out of my community, mostly during the summers. They were similar to study tours. I call them "get-to-know-the-ghetto tours."

Because of my experiences I believe MCC should not create short-term programs. Many communities today, and as I experienced my neighborhood growing up in the south Bronx and Harlem, suffer from serious misery. More and more people do not have mutually vulnerable relationships—not sacrificial, "covenantal" relationships through, for example, church, synagogue or mosque. Some causes of this are crack cocaine, alcohol abuse, disintegration of family, and poor jobs, schooling and health services. All of these come together to dissolve community.



James Logan

MCC should send its best and brightest long-term people into these kinds of communities. Short, sound-bite service contributes to the destabilization of community. In that sense, short-term service is, I think, very much like crack cocaine and alcoholism; it gives a false sense of security. But it does not build a coherent, intergenerational community that empowers its members.

SP: I have administered PLOW, and had some brief hands-on experience there. I have also been part of study tours, and hosted them as an MCC country representative in Africa.

I agree with James that MCC should not move headlong into more short-term programs; we're basically a long-term agency and should stay that way. But I do advocate for cautious and modest increases in short-term work.

Q: James talks of halting all MCC short-term work and Steve advocates proceeding with caution. What are the downfalls of short-term programs?

SP: We need to destroy the traditional paradigm of we (the short-term servers) as the helpers and the local people as needy. We need to think more in terms of an educational model where our youth are the students and the local people, wherever we go, are the teachers.

Short-term programs can have a kind of "zoo" image; participants come in, look at people and then leave. It can be exploitative. These programs can, ironically, reinforce some of the worst stereotypes—those you hope would be diminished by such exposure. Short-term volunteers don't have time to really get to know people. I hear people returning from three-year MCC assignments say they were just beginning to get to know the culture and the people. If our three-year people say that, what do we expect to happen in one week?

JL: Given our society, where we now have more than 1 million people in prison, and increasing rates of infant mortality and illiteracy, child and spouse abuse, communities need people committed to them long term. For Mennonites to send people for short terms is to continue to exploit these people.

SP: James, aren't you portraying short-term efforts at their worst? I hope our programs can counteract the worst and accentuate the best. If we want people to make long-term commitments, don't we need to give them a taste that would make them go home and say, "Now I want to respond in a more helpful way than just going for one week"? Won't a short-term experience be more effective than anything they can learn in a classroom or in church?

A good example of a life-changing experience is that of a high-school student who spent a week with the Denver Opportunity for Outreach and Reflection (DOOR) program. Program directors remember he was a bit on the "rowdy" side, and they didn't expect much of a response from him. Surprisingly, they met the young man some years later and he told them, "That week in Denver changed my life." He went on to graduate from EMC (Eastern Mennonite College, now University, in Harrisonburg, Va.) with a social work degree, and expressed interest in seminary.

JL: Our commitment to a community must move toward being as covenant-binding as a marriage relationship. Parents in our churches would not encourage their children to enter a short-term marriage to get a taste for a later life-long marriage commitment.

I think our short-term programs a
destructive, and undermine our b
well-being and empowerment.
—James Logan

Won't a short-te
than anything so
or in church?
—Stephen Penn

The same ethic should guide our work with those living in communities of struggle and hope. We must not undermine the critical need for long-term social relationships in which people are mutually vulnerable.

SP: Using your marriage analogy, couldn't short-term service be seen as a "dating" experience where you go out for coffee and spend a few hours together? We can't ignore that part of the relationship.

JL: Yes, but not enough of our youth come back after that first date. My hard evidence is my life from age 8 to 19. I didn't see anybody come back. They never called me. They were my pals for the two weeks they were in the city. I've dealt with hundreds of them in my life, and they haven't come back yet. These kinds of "relationships" are not sustainable.

With our dwindling resources at mission agencies and MCC, we should send only our strongest people to suffering communities. We must tell our children: "Wait. This is a high calling. You can't do it in one or two weeks."

Q: What if MCC says this and

we don't have all the parents and youth leaders behind us? Do we lose those constituents? Are we willing to risk that?

SP: It depends on how we communicate. If we come across as stuffy and haughty, losing support is a possibility. We could be called out of touch and irrelevant. But if we communicate lovingly, without arrogance, ultimately our constituents will accept our message.

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We would not want to criticize other organizations doing short-term mission. We could work in partnership with them, referring young people to their programs.

JL: What we'd be saying to other agencies is, "OK, we won't sin, but it's OK for you to go ahead and sin." I don't think we should advocate for people to go to other agencies for short-term service if we don't believe in it. It's time for a prophetic, serious mind-change on this.

Q: Why is it time?

JL: I think our short-term programs are for the most part destructive, and undermine our best intentions for community well-being and empowerment.

SP: It feels impossible to argue with James because I don't share his experience as a recipient. How can I argue with his story? I do not think that MCC, in our short-term programs, has been blissfully unaware of what other people have said to us. But who do we listen to? James' is a powerful voice, but there are other voices. If we heard from everyone that our short-term programs were a total waste, we would stop them. We have also been hearing other signals.

JL: We have to look at the moral fabric of the argument. From a biblical, relational perspective, and the model of Jesus Christ, long-term relationships are the cornerstone of communities.

Q: Is MCC's constituency ready for this prophetic message?

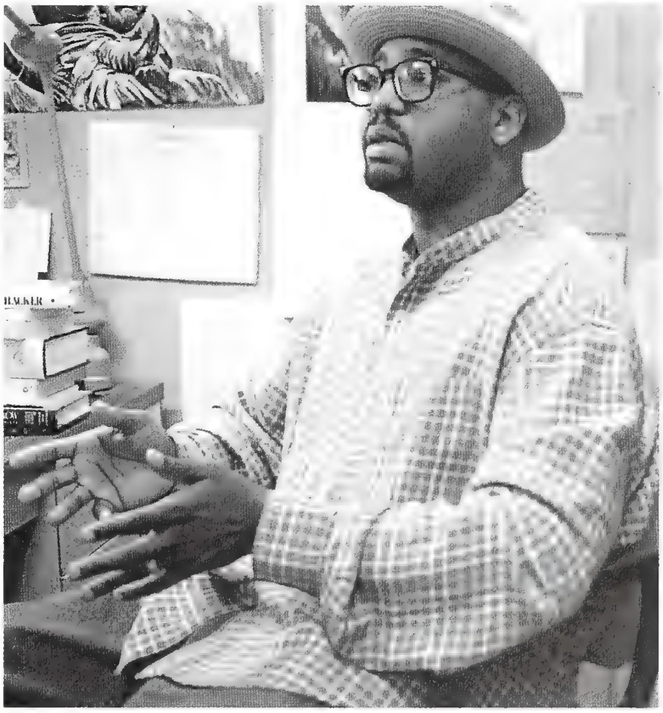
SP: Yes, I have faith they can hear the message. But my message allows for short-term programs. James' does not.

JL: Yes I'm hopeful. For me, except in the case of direct relief or some other special circumstances, I think we should not be promoting short-term programs.

SP: But James, if people live totally divorced from each other, and their only images of other people are what they read or see on television, do they need to wait for the sacred moment when they are accepted for a three-year term of service? Is it only then that they can venture into this other world?

JL: That's right, just like the world of marriage. Only when you make that long-term commitment can you venture into that world of covenant and love, particularly in communities where covenant and love are at a critical low point.

SP: We must be careful not to develop an arrogant culture in which MCC is reserved only for the "enlightened" few. I'm afraid if we're purely long term we might become a kind of specialized elite. But our long-term commitments need to be coupled with the joyful spontaneity and love of life that is more typical of the young than of older professionals.



JL: I think anyone can serve, as long as they go with fear, trembling, humility and compassion. It can be a person with a Ph.D. or with an eighth-grade education. Long-term commitment is not a sign of elitism. It's just people who are saying, "We humbly submit ourselves to taking risks for the well-being of a community." We're not being elite when we tell people to wait for marriage; that doesn't mean that we think we're better than everyone else. It's just a reflection of our commitment.

Q: What do you think? Should MCC commit itself to short-term service programs? Reader response is welcome. See page two for mail, fax and e-mail addresses. ■

Andrea Schrock Wenger is assistant director of MCC's Visitor Exchange Programs and a freelance writer.

Letter from...

Cabo, Brazil: A fragile trust

Amy Tripp works at two schools with programs for the Deaf in Cabo, Brazil. The students are children, from preschool to fourth grade. Many struggle to survive, and would have no other chance for education, because they are deaf. Ezekiel was one of these children. Rejected by his family, he roamed the often dangerous streets. As his teacher, Tripp felt she was beginning to connect with Ezekiel. Then he disappeared.

Eight months ago I had been his teacher. Ezekiel—a deaf boy living on the streets. Abandoned and unloved. Picked up by a Brazilian government agency and brought to me to "make normal." Ezekiel might never have a "normal" life with parents and a home, but he wasn't hitting, biting or stealing from me anymore. In fact, we had reached a level of trust we both cherished. It was new for Ezekiel. It was precious to me.

Then he disappeared. Weeks passed. Then months. Fearing he had been assassinated by death squads in Recife, I had no hope of seeing my little friend again. His laughter, his smile, his tentative touches that required every inch of his being stayed with me in my prayers.

This morning a student stopped me as I rode my bike to the bank. "Amy, I found another deaf kid that could go to school," said Cleibson.

"Did you invite him to come to the school?" I asked.

"Sure, but he doesn't understand sign language." I looked to where Cleibson pointed and my eyes landed on Ezekiel just as his eyes landed on me. Immediately we ran toward each other.

Ezekiel landed in my arms. He'd grown taller but more skinny, so malnourished that his head was too big for his body. He had so many new scars. His skin had light patches, his faced looked crooked somehow. A 12-year-old who looked 8 years old.

"Where have you been?" I signed. He copied my signs. "How did you hurt yourself?" I asked, pointing to fresh scars.

"How did you hurt yourself?" he mimicked. All we could we do was look in each other's eyes and smile. I pointed to the bank, and began locking my bike to a guard rail. Ezekiel gestured that he wanted to ride the bike. "Why not?" I thought. I wanted to show him I still trusted him. I gave him the bike to ride.

"That was stupid," I heard a nearby man say. I wondered. I'm sure we looked strange. A white foreigner making wild arm and hand gestures to a bruised and battered street child. I came out of the bank 15 minutes later.

What is life like without someone to confide in, to trust?

A man approached me. "That street kid took off with your bike. You won't see it again."

"Sir," I informed him, "I know that little boy and I gave him my bike to ride."

"Well then excuse me. I don't want to interfere. But you will never see that bike again."

It was hot. I could have stood in the shade, but I wanted Ezekiel to see it was time to come "home." I waited and waited.

"Ezekiel, where are you? Please show me you understand trust. Please don't steal my bike. It's not the cost. I can walk more. But I want you to know that someone knows your innate goodness. Come, Ezekiel."

I thought after 20 minutes that maybe I had made a mistake. Ezekiel has nothing, and to suddenly be given a shiny, red bike... Maybe I would take off, too, if I were him. What is life like without someone to confide in, to trust?

I began walking home, wondering how Ezekiel would sell a bike. Then I heard a yelp. I turned around and saw my little friend.

"Rides well," he gestured with a "thumbs up" sign.

"Thank you for taking care of it, Ezekiel," I signed.

"Thank you for taking care of it, Ezekiel," he responded. Ezekiel gave me the bike.

I motioned for him to come near. I held him for the few seconds he would allow. "Come to school with me!" I said. He refused to follow me.

We went our separate ways, but not without waving until we couldn't see each other anymore. ■

—*Amy Tripp*

Amy Tripp works at two municipal schools, C.A.I.C. and Dr. Claudio Gueires de Leite. Both are part of MCC's Global Family program. MCC photo by Linda Shelly.

If you would like to contribute to the schools, contact Kate Myers in Akron or Evelyn Peters-Rojas in Winnipeg (see page 15).

Put a chicken before the eggs

Dona Maria knows the answer to the proverbial question, "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" With a $25 MCC loan and technical advice, she started an egg business. This money purchased young laying hens, feed and vaccines for 100 chickens.

Dona Maria and her husband are among Nicaragua's rural families facing increasing post-war hardships. Low grain prices mean farmers make no profit for their labor. Rural families have no access to credit, and unemployment is rampant. Dona Maria's husband occasionally works as a day laborer, earning $1.50 U.S. a day.

Dona Maria is able to earn money without leaving her home and children. As she gathers eggs, she knows that for her, the chicken came first!

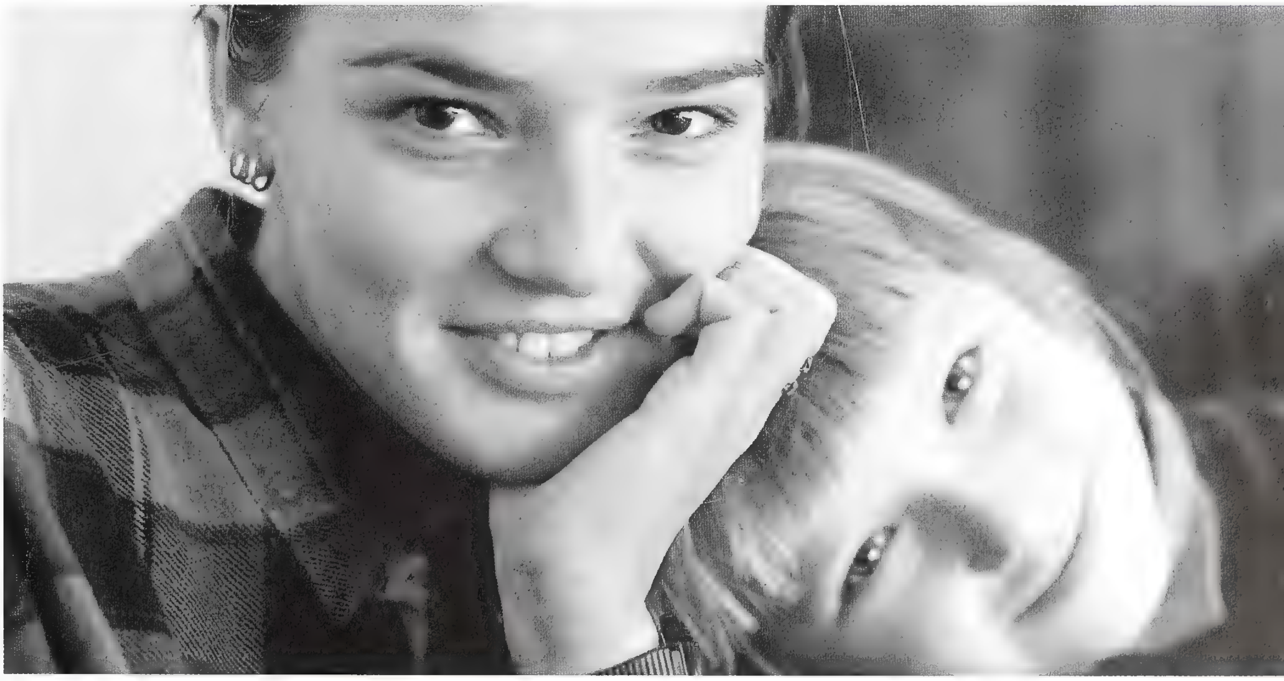
You can make a difference by supporting small-business projects in Nicaragua (Giving Project #922-1001). Contact your nearest MCC office for a Giving Projects catalogue.

Send a message of love

Tamara and her family live in a condemned building in Belgrade in the former Yugoslavia. They fled Sarajevo in May 1992 after a shell destroyed their home. Their car, crammed with possessions, was stolen in Belgrade, leaving them with the clothes they wore and the cash they carried.

With passports stamped "no nationality," they are refugees. Like many refugees, they receive MCC material resources to see them through the start of a new life. Soap, health kits, blankets and clothing are a message of love and concern.

Make a difference by supplying material resources to this family and others. Collect new bars of soap in October, single/twin-size flat sheets in November, and make health kits in December. Contact your nearest MCC office for details.



Tamara (right) and her sister Olja. MCC photo by Howard Zehr.

Where is your nearest MCC office?

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151
(717) 859-3889

MCC Central States
106 West 24th Street
PO Box 235
North Newton, Kansas 67117
(316) 283-2720

MCC East Coast
21 South 12th Street
PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151

MCC Great Lakes
13363 Jericho Road, Box 82
Kidron, OH 44636
(216) 857-7721

West Coast MCC
1010 G Street
Reedley, CA 93654
(209) 638-6911

Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

MCC Alberta
76 Skyline Crescent N.E.
Calgary, AB T2K 5X7
(403) 275-6935

MCC British Columbia
Box 2038
31872 South Fraser Way
Clearbrook, BC V2T 3T8
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134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

MCC Ontario
50 Kent Avenue
Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1
(519)745-8458

MCC Saskatchewan
600 - 45th Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7L 5W9
(306) 665-2555

MCC doctor is "someone to talk to"

Providing adequate health care is one way MCC worker Merlin Friesen understands his role. Helping his neighbors realize their dreams is another.

Dr. Friesen lives on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota where he serves as the Porcupine Health Clinic's first full-time physician. Nestled in the heart of the reservation, the clinic opened in July 1992.

Merlin's 32-hour work week involves pediatric and other routine care, treating diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. "The patient volume is not heavy so I can wear many different hats," he says. He serves as lab and X-ray technician, pharmacist, and has recently developed a computerized system for running the pharmacy.

> **"I am less focused on pushing people into a model the profession promotes, and more focused on responding to how they see their own health needs."**

Merlin is quick to identify the cultural advantages of practicing medicine in Porcupine. "People are so generous and giving," he says. He relates how a local woman who gave him a painting of a Lakota warrior riding home from battle. "The painting, titled, 'Comes Home A-Dancing,' shows the community's appreciation for MCC and depicts how I feel about the job I am privileged to do each day."

Merlin has learned from the Lakota that life is not evaluated by how many things one accomplishes in a day. This frees him from some of the time constraints that frustrate physicians. "People here are less focused on wanting to have medicine in their hands than having someone to talk to and give them information," he says.

As the first and only Native American-owned and -operated health facility on a U.S. reservation, the clinic has renewed cultural pride for Porcupine residents and allowed Merlin to discover new models for practicing medicine. "I am less focused on pushing people into a model the profession promotes, and more focused on responding to how they see their own health needs," he observes.

In December, Merlin, his wife Rita and three daughters will leave behind their double-wide trailer and move to Paoli, Ind., where he will work with a group of family physicians. Merlin will take with him new ways of practicing medicine, and his own dreams of a secure future for the Porcupine Clinic. ■

Delphine Martin is a freelance writer in Lancaster, Pa.

Merlin Friesen gives a shot in the arm, literally, to Porcupine resident Cecilia Martin. Before the clinic opened, says Cecilia, she sometimes had to wait six or seven hours to see a physician at the nearest hospital. MCC photo by Emily Will.

Assignment: medical doctor

Porcupine, South Dakota
Porcupine Clinic needs a physician to follow Dr. Friesen as medical director.

This person will be part of the Pine Ridge MCC unit. Job description includes management and delivery of outpatient clinical services, and training and supervision of medical staff. The Medical Director is responsible to the Clinic Director.

La Crete, Alberta
Residents of this northern Canadian farming community have asked for an experienced physician to work in a progressive regional health care system.

The physician will help administer community health care programs, and will provide basic medical services in local hospitals and a remote health center.

This region is home to numerous cultural groups, including conservative Mennonites.

Panyam, Plateau State, Nigeria
The Church of Christ in Nigeria seeks a family doctor to work in its rural health program. The doctor will treat both inpatients and outpatients in a clinic at Panyam. The clinic is also headquarters for the Village Health program that operates dispensaries in the region. Training village health workers may also be a part of this job.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. For service information contact your nearest MCC office (see page 15).

a Common Place

Father Malkie of the Syrian Orthodox Church.

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A way home

Hold on, then let go

Six dance steps for life with teenagers

Sara Wenger Shenk

At a birthday party the other evening I took an unhappy, wriggling newborn baby from someone else and began a rhythmic walk, patting him as I moved around the room. He relaxed immediately, his eyes widening with pleasure.

After soothing our three children through countless bellyaches, I now feel like an old hand with babies. Well I remember with our firstborn how my every action was tentative and filled with questions about what might happen or ought to happen next.

RNS

Being an old hand with babies feels good. I've worked hard to achieve a measure of competence with little people. I wish I felt as confident about relating to our two teenage sons. One of Jim Croegaert's songs says it well:

Sara Wenger Shenk is author of Coming Home *(Good Books, 1992) and lives in Harrisonburg, Va.*

"Hold on. Hold on. Now let go. Just when you think you've learned it, there's another step to know."

Folks in this age group seem to excel in versatility for giving perplexing, mixed signals. I don't think our sons are as confused as we are, generally. In fact, they usually seem to know exactly what they mean. It's just that we, their parents, are so used to relating to them as little people in formation that when they want to be treated as adults, it's hard not to bring up reminders about all they don't know yet.

They painfully remind me of my own youthful arrogance and how much I *knew* I knew, only to discover how that arrogance kept me from truly knowing. But also, in a more positive light, what seemed like arrogance in retrospect may have been the show of confidence needed to act on what I felt I knew so I could learn more.

In reflecting on life with teens, there are a number of perspectives that help us dance more gracefully as their all-too-often clumsy parents.

1. Step lightly as we dance. This is especially important for those of us with strong convictions and a sense that everything matters. Somehow, the more confident and at peace we are about where we stand, the more we can allow stretching room for our children to find their own authentic way of living in relation to those convictions.

2. Give our children the benefit of the doubt. Frequently I discover that they've internalized a lot more of what we've taught them than seems obvious in the heat of the moment. And what they know we think of them tends to become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

3. Learn to change dance steps frequently and sensitively. Our growing teens still need parental care, whether or not they acknowledge it. But more often they need us to dance out of the room. Pushing forcibly into their dance by overdoing our parenting when they obviously need to make their own decision is likely to backfire.

4. Give our children space to make their own mistakes. This is a tough and exacting dance step because it requires us to discern when we need to be protective as parents and when we need to let our children experience the consequences of their decisions.

> ***Let's live our life, dance our own dance, with integrity and joy. More than likely their steps will find their unique way of harmonizing with ours.***

5. Remember to claim the freedom to dance our own rhythm. Even as we try to remain sensitive to their ever-changing needs to parenting we must not let them throw off our internal rhythm.

6. Most of all, love them no matter what. Let's live our life, dance our own dance, with integrity and joy. More than likely their steps will find their unique way of harmonizing with ours.

Croegaert's song continues, "Touching and reaching and moving away, each in their time, each in their moment. ... Turn left. Turn right. Turn to the Son. And love will be beside you, surprise you when it comes. And love it will surprise you when it comes."

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XMAS 95

Winnipeg church makes difference in refugee lives

Winnipeg (MCC)— Sponsoring a refugee family may not make a big difference to the global problem of refugees, but it makes a big difference to the family who gets sponsored, says Christine Ssenyange of Uganda.

It was in July 1990 that Ssenyange, 39, and her four children were told their application to come to Canada had been approved.

"They said, 'Christine, prepare yourself—you are going to Canada.' I couldn't believe my ears. I was thinking it couldn't be true."

But it was true. The following month they received a warm welcome from their new sponsors, the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. The sponsorship was arranged by Mennonite Central Committee.

"We were strangers to them, and they were strangers to us," says Ssenyange, who had fled Uganda in 1981 to a refugee camp in Kenya. It didn't take long before the strangers who welcomed her became friends.

"I had nothing in Africa. Now I am in a strange country and I have everything. At home there is no future. Here we have a future."

Ssenyange, now a member of the Sargent Avenue Church, says her future looks bright, and her children's futures look even brighter.

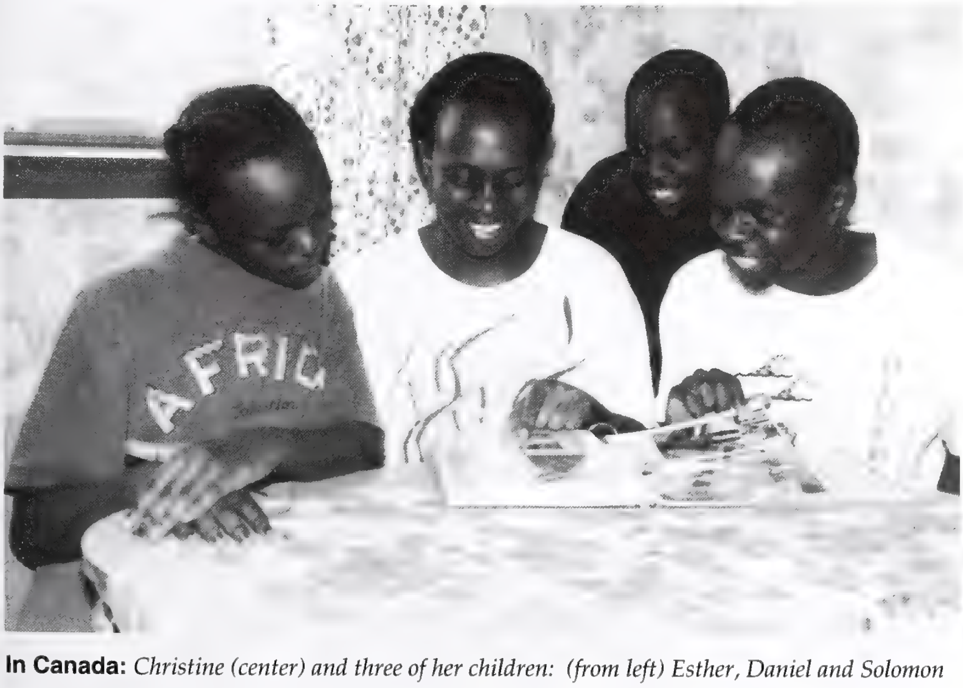
She has been self-supporting since November 1990, when she started working as a custodian at the church. She recently completed a nurse aide course at a local college and is considering taking a course on child care this fall. She is paying for these courses from her own earnings.

Through careful spending practices, she has been able to pay back more than $5,000 toward her original transportation costs of $6,633. She also saved enough to take her children back to Uganda for a visit.

Her two oldest children, Herbert and Solomon, have graduated from high school as honor roll students. Both will attend the University of Manitoba this fall. They are paying for their education through part-time jobs and scholarships. The two younger children, Esther and Daniel, are also earning academic and athletic awards.

Christine still has vivid recollections of that terrible day in 1981 when soldiers from Idi Amin's army captured her husband and other men in her village.

She fled that night to her parents' home in a nearby village. About two



Gladys Terichow

In Canada: *Christine (center) and three of her children: (from left) Esther, Daniel and Solomon*

Inside the news

Youth serve up dinner to Portland homeless / p. 16

Colombian minister shares experience with Kansas Mennonites / p. 17

John Esau's new book points to new ideas about leadership / p. 18

Nineteen people were arrested at Project ELF (Extremely Low Frequency) Aug. 6 in Clam Lake, Wis. Activists circled the compound of ELF, the Navy's controversial submarine transmitter, then sat down, blocking the driveway to the facility. The action culminated a 450-mile peace walk that began in Chicago July 1. Over 300 arrests have taken place at the ELF site since 1991, when activists say that the end of the Cold War rendered Project ELF obsolete.

• • •

The Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India sent a certificate to Vern Preheim, General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) general secretary, encouraging GC members in North America to attend the 13th assembly of Mennonite World Conference in Calcutta, India, in January 1997. "Let us have the joy of your personal presence," stated the document signed by seven agencies that belong to the fellowship.

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee is picking up slack left by the Canadian Armed Forces. The CAF had agreed to deliver school supplies collected for children in the former Yugoslavia but backpedaled, partly for fear that flying the supplies might show favoritism and hinder the peace process. The 1,363 kilograms of supplies from the "Give from the Heart Campaign," collected by Carpathia Elementary School students in Winnipeg, sat for five months. The school offered the supplies to MCC, which agreed to deliver the supplies to Bosnian children in August.

Habitat for Humanity held a building initiative in 10 U.S. cities during the week of Sept. 10-17. In Minneapolis-St. Paul, the organization celebrated the completion of its 40,000th home built worldwide.

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Thirty-three people, ages 9 to 71, rode in Bike Skyline Virginia, a five-day, 265-mile bike ride that raised about $7,500 for Mennonite Central Committee. Bicyclists came from Alaska, Oregon, Illinois, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

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Nearly 100 conscientious objectors and wives of COs gathered Aug. 12-15 at Abbotsford, B.C., to remember their service during World War II. Mennonite Central Committee B.C. and the B.C. chapter of Seniors for Peace sponsored the event, scheduled to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Some 4,000 alternative service men planted 100 million seedlings during the war years. The value of the now harvestable trees is set at $1.75 billion.

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The Church of the Brethren is redesigning its General Board over the next 28 months. The need to redesign became evident to the 25-member General Board in February, largely because of a downward trend in congregational giving. The Redesign Steering Committee will hire an independent consultant to oversee the redesign process. A timeline calls for finalized plans by March 1997.

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More than 200 Mennonite educators met in a two-day joint meeting July 24-25 in Wichita. The first-ever Mennonite Educators Conference was sponsored by Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools, Mennonite Board of Education, Mennonite Elementary Education Council and Mennonite Secondary Education Council.

to three weeks later the soldiers shot her father.

That night she fled to a refugee camp in Kenya—an overnight trip by small cars and a bus. She stayed in the camp for two years before being moved to a one-room house in Nairobi to make room for newcomers.

She received assistance from the United Nations to cover rent and food costs. She supplemented her income by sewing and selling cotton petticoats, but many times the family didn't have enough to eat.

When Ssenyange hears about refugees in other countries who need sponsors in Canada, she realizes how fortunate she is and wishes she could do more to encourage Canadian churches and individuals to consider sponsoring a refugee family.

"There are so many refugees, and you can't help everybody, but it makes a big difference to one family," says Ssenyange. *Gladys Terichow*

Youth service workers serve up food to homeless

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—It was a scorching 100 degrees Fahrenheit outside the day Bryan Thiessen volunteered at the Sisters of the Road Cafe in Portland, Ore. Inside, as he dished up piping hot food for homeless customers, it felt even warmer.

"My lunch break was more of a drink break because I was dehydrated," he says.

Despite the heat, Thiessen, from Greendale First Mennonite Church, Chilliwack, B.C., counts this experience as the highlight of the July 16-23 Youth Venture. Twelve youth from Canada and the United States signed up for the week-long service project, sponsored by the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

Homeless customers at the Sisters of the Road Cafe may buy lunch for $1.25, or $1 worth of food stamps. They also have the option of working for $5 per hour to pay for their meals. The cafe serves about 200 people each day.

"There was such a friendly atmosphere. The workers treated the homeless like they were their neighbors," says Rachel Hostetler, Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan. She worked as a waitress.

"Everyone seemed happy. People were busy talking to each other," says Thiessen, noting a poster above the cafe door that read, "In here there are no strangers, only friends we never met."

Before the Portland Youth Venture, Thiessen hadn't had much contact with homeless people. "My apprehension prior to the experience was a little too high," he says.

After a conversation with a homeless man who had recently finished

Venturers: *Portland Youth Venture participants included (front, left to right) Sheila Doerksen, Carrot River, Sask.; Bryan Thiessen, Chilliwack, B.C.; (second row) Michelle Friesen, Carrot River; Shawn Rioux, Chilliwack; Burke Hummel, Berlin, Ohio; Rachel Hostetler, Kansas City, Kan.; (third row) Inga Reinhart, Seattle; Heidi Spense, Chilliwack; youth leader Kim Rempel, Winnipeg; Robin Rioux, Chilliwack; (back row) Jeff Thiessen, Chilliwack; Erica Edwards, Carbondale, Colo.; youth leader Dan Wolfe, Chilliwack.*

PLOW exposes youth to urban issues

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Homeless people are not saints. But then no one is. The homeless are just like the rest of us who come with "our myriad of experiences and personality quirks," says Gwen Gustafson-Zook, Portland, Ore.

Gwen and her husband, Les, are directors of Portland Learning Outreach and Worship (PLOW), which offers short-term service projects to church groups like Youth Venture. "Our goal is to provide people with exposure to urban issues," says Les.

PLOW focuses on homelessness because "it is a substantial issue here," says Les, noting that there are about 5,000 adults and about 500 to 1,000 youth who are homeless in Portland. "We don't deal with gangs or racism because these are harder issues to address in a short-term service project."

Gwen and Les hope the service experiences at PLOW will make youth ask questions. Gwen says, "We hope they come away asking, What opportunities are there for service in my community? We want them to address their stereotypes and ask, How can we love people when we put them in a box?" *Carla Reimer*

serving time in jail for shoplifting, Thiessen realized that "people are people whether they drive fancy cars or push shopping buggies. It made me more accepting." *Carla Reimer*

Colombian minister visits North America

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Noe Gonzalia, a Mennonite pastor from Santafe de Bogota, Colombia, tells a story about Jose Chuquin, a longtime Colombian Mennonite leader who, while working for World Vision in Lima, Peru, was shot in a terrorist attack and later died.

The story is important to Gonzalia for two reasons. One was the grief the national church suffered over the loss of a gifted leader. The other is that "it could have happened in Colombia."

In that way, the story helps illustrate what Gonzalia calls "the social reality of the church in Colombia." He spent this past summer trying to help Kansas Mennonites understand a bit about that reality.

Gonzalia has been involved in ministry in various Mennonite churches in Colombia and has taught at the Mennonite seminary in Bogota.

In 1994, he, Araminta (his wife) and their children, Felipe, 6, Noramy, 4, and Anner, 2, came to Elkhart, Ind., where Gonzalia is studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) for two years.

Special assignment: Gonzalia was able to offer a different kind of Mennonite perspective through a special assignment this summer. He received some of the credit he needs at AMBS by being involved at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., preaching, teaching Sunday school and attending committee meetings to see how a large church functions.

He also traveled around central Kansas under the sponsorship of the Commission on Overseas Mission, speaking and teaching about his experience in Colombia.

"We have to confront the reality as it is, even when other evangelical churches try to ignore it," he says. "There is violence, poverty, political persecution—it's a kind of civil war."

Gonzalia has spent time working with MENCOLDES (Mennonite Foundation for Social Development), a program of the Colombian Mennonite church. This community-based organization strives to improve the living conditions of impoverished Colombians. Government statistics say about 40 percent of the population there lives in "absolute poverty."

"In some areas outside Bogota, I heard stories about things the media don't report—people killed by guerrillas or the military, people who are forced to leave their homes because of threats.

"In the church, we are trying to address some of these realities," he says. "For example, one Mennonite church began a program to provide housing for people in the neighborhood who were homeless. Many other churches wouldn't be willing to take

"Whose United Nations is it?," a Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored seminar, will be held Oct. 26-28 in New York City. It will explore the role of the United Nations. Topics will include analysis of peacekeeping operations and the resurgence of religion in world affairs. Presenters will include MCC workers who have served in Somalia and Rwanda. Contact John Rempel, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; phone/fax (212) 673-7970.

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Mennonite Central Committee, through China Educational Exchange, has contributed $13,700 Cdn./$10,000 U.S. to assist some of the 155 million people being affected by flooding in China. Heavy rains have swamped eight provinces in China. The worst flooding in more than a century has devastated northeastern China while flooding along the Yangtze River is the worst in 40 years. More than 1,500 have been killed, almost 2 million homes have been destroyed and another 7 million damaged. MCC's contribution will help reconstruct homes, elementary schools and church buildings.

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Christian Peacemaker Teams director Gene Stoltzfus and social work professor Otto Driedger, Regina, Sask., traveled to Russia Aug. 27 to investigate the current situation in Chechnya. The two spent seven days in Chechnya talking with representatives of religious, political, peace and human rights organizations in order to learn firsthand about the conflict there and explore possible CPT responses to the ongoing violence. Driedger, director of the School of Human Justice at the University of Regina, has worked as a consultant for the development of human services in the Ukraine.

Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan., will celebrate its 10th anniversary Oct. 8.

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Vista de la Montana United Methodist Church is building its sanctuary on top of a retired intercontinental ballistic missile silo. Members call their new church a "symbol of peace." Because of its military past, the 10-acre site near Catalina, north of Tucson, Ariz., was available for a good price. Before selling the land the U.S. Air Force blasted the silos, filled the area with rubble, and smoothed the surface. (*Gospel Herald*)

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An African Church of the Brethren architect built a mosque as part of his Christian witness in his community, Garkida, Nigeria. Peter Mshelbwala was known as a skilled and honest builder. "It was a Christian the [Muslim] committee chose to do the building because they knew they could trust a Christian," Mshelbwala says. He says he does not often get such an opportunity to witness for Christ. He has built facilities for many Christian churches. (*Messenger*)

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This summer 96 General Conference Mennonite Church members and 252 Mennonite Church members attended the Evangelism Leaders Academies, held in three U.S. locations. In addition about 175 Mennonites attended a Living in Faithful Evangelism (LIFE) symposium in Edmonton, Alta., this summer. Speaker Ron Sider said, "It's time for Mennonites to lead the way in evangelism; we have helped the poor around the world. I'm resolved to ask God to give me the gift of evangelism—to lead more people to Jesus Christ."

on this kind of work.

"I have seen many people coming into our church [in Colombia], coming from many different backgrounds, who have become disenchanted with their own churches because these churches are not speaking to what people see around them every day."

Gonzalia

He believes that "speaking to where you are" can apply to North American churches who are facing their own particular problems.

"What I've seen in rural churches," he says, "is that most of the young people are leaving, so there are few children, and membership is declining.

"The reality is that there are not enough jobs in rural areas. I would like to see the church working more in the cities with those who have left the rural areas, rather than trying to get them back. Going to the city means more opportunity to win more people to Christianity, too."

While the specific issues that North American and Colombian churches face may be quite different, he says, "we have all been called to be faithful to the gospel. We both have to confront our social realities. In Colombia we must ask the question, What does it mean for us as Mennonite believers, with our Mennonite heritage, to live in this society? It's a challenge. But even when the answer is different, for Colombia or North America, the question is the same." *Melanie A. Zuercher*

Esau sets out new theology of leadership

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—John Esau's father, J.J. Esau, known to some as "the blind evangelist," always wore a suit and tie—even on Saturdays, says his son. It was part of his professional identity as a Mennonite minister.

By the time the younger Esau had graduated from Mennonite Biblical Seminary in 1962, however, the Mennonite definition of pastor had changed.

When Esau was ordained, with his father taking part in the service, he had just one request: "After the ceremony, please don't introduce me as 'Reverend.'"

As Esau reports in a new collection of essays he edited, *Understanding Ministerial Leadership*, his father's reply was short and to the point: "But why are we doing this?"

This story illustrates the changing view of ministerial leadership and authority from the generation of the elder Esau to the younger. It reflects a wider social trend—in the United States, in the 1960s in general, all authority was being questioned, from pastors to presidents.

At Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), then-president of Goshen Biblical Seminary John Howard Yoder was the driving force behind a new theology of ministry that was often referred to as "the priesthood of all believers."

"I would like to see us restore clarity around the role of pastors in the Mennonite church."

John Esau

In other words, all the members of a congregation could—indeed, were expected to—exercise their gifts in teaching, music, worship leading or care of children within the context of the church. A pastor might be called because her or his gifts filled certain functions (e.g., preaching, visitation), according to this model.

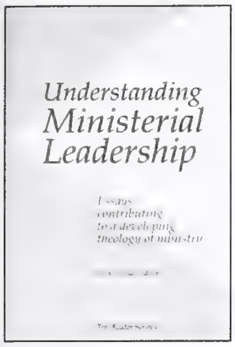
Some congregations took this to the extreme of having no paid leadership. Pairs or teams of elders called out from the congregation often served as leaders, their roles and functions defined by each congregation.

The priesthood of believers model did not necessarily reject the office of paid, professional ministry. Yet that was in many cases its result, leading to what Esau, director of ministerial leadership services for the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), now calls "a failed theology of ministry."

"There was confusion," he says. "There was conflict between pastors and congregations. The classic quote came at the GC triennial sessions in

Saskatoon in 1986 when a pastor spoke from the floor and said, 'We've been given the responsibility to lead the church, but not the authority.'"

Others have pointed out that the blurring of the boundary between pastor and congregation could be at the root of some abuse of authority, revealed most often in recent years as pastoral sexual abuse.



Esau served as a pastor for 22 years, at Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis and Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan. Experience, observation and conversations with other pastors and church leaders helped convince him that "the pendulum had swung too far to the other side, from a bishop or elder system that was hierarchical and authoritarian to a definition of pastoral leadership that was so vague hardly anyone understood it. As Mennonites, we needed a clearer understanding and definition of the office of the ministry."

For this reason he collected his own thoughts and those of nine others into *Understanding Ministerial Leadership: Essays Contributing to a Developing Theology of Ministry*, published by the Institute of Mennonite Studies at AMBS. The book is intended as a corrective, he says, to try to bring the pendulum back closer to the middle.

"The pastorate is a profession," Esau argues. "A pastor has a role, with expectations and responsibilities, just like in any other job."

He points to a Midwestern church with more than 200 members that has only one pastor. "[The pastor there] carries a full range of responsibilities," says Esau, "and he works hard, but he doesn't work huge amounts of overtime constantly, because he doesn't do everything. The congregation takes responsibility, too.

"Some have misunderstood my position as calling for a new pastoral authoritarianism or an 'elitist' pastoral profession," he says. "That isn't what I'm advocating. Talking about a professional ministry means, for one thing, that ministers are accountable to someone. I would like to see us restore clarity around the role of pastors in the Mennonite church."

Now when Esau visits AMBS, as he regularly does, he consciously and deliberately wears a suit and tie, coming full circle, perhaps, to his father's use of "professional garb."

"I'm trying to set an example in a context where professional appearance is often downplayed," he says. "Someone pointed out to me that when we train missionaries to go overseas, we take great care to teach them the importance of trying to be sensitive to the host culture. Yet the typical pastor coming out of seminary is often completely insensitive to the culture and expectations of the community that he or she is called to serve. The community today expects seminary graduates to look and act like pastors."

"Dressing professionally" is a concrete example of one of the ideas explored in *Understanding Ministerial Leadership*. Another idea is that pastoral ministry is more than just a matter of the "gifts" a person happens to possess.

Esau illustrates this from his own family's experience. Bernice, his wife, is the head nurse on a surgical floor, and his daughter is in apartment management. "When we share stories, we find that the same things in people make for success in all three settings," he says. "Those things are integrity, good self-esteem and the ability to function with competence and with sensitivity to the needs of other people.

"All of us have found that in hiring someone, experience is one of the least important things to look at," he says. "What you want is a quality of character that you can't train for. Of course, the big challenge is, How do you find that?

"In the Mennonite church, this priority on 'gifts' has actually skewed our perception of what we really need. We tend to look at 'gifts' superficially. For example, we assume a good public speaker will automatically make a good preacher, and that's not always true. I'm pretty skeptical of the gifts language. The ultimate gift for ministry is not what we can do, but who we are." *Melanie A. Zuercher*

See a review of *Understanding Ministerial Leadership* on page 22.

Missionaries with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and with Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church met for their first joint Overseas Missions Seminar, held July 17-23 at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. More than 80 workers and staff shared experiences.

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After 15 years of sponsoring the Native Gardening Program on reserves throughout Canada, Mennonite Central Committee Canada "planted" gardeners on the Pine Ridge Reservation (Oglala Nation) in Porcupine, S.D. Barbara and Jeurg Kipfer of Langhau in Emmental, Switzerland, helped start some 30 gardens, some with school or community groups but most with individual families. "Gardens are a small step toward self-sufficiency and a way for the younger generation to find their way back to nature," says Jeurg. The Kipfers ended their work with the Oglala Lakota people in August.

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The U.S. Army used radioactive arms in the Gulf War in 1991, according to *National Catholic Reporter*. Depleted uranium (DU), a highly toxic and radioactive material, was used for the first time by U.S. forces in the Gulf War, confirmed a Pentagon spokesperson. DU is the by-product of the uranium-enrichment process used to produce nuclear fuel for power plants. When used on the battlefield, DU is released as a fine particulate after exploding. DU is cheap, readily available and so dense it can pierce steel. There is controversy over DU's long-term effects. Some attribute kidney and liver failure among Iraqi children to DU exposure. The U.S. Army Environmental Policy Institute reported to Congress in June 1994 that, among others, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Thailand, Israel and France have developed or are developing DU-containing weapons systems.

Record

MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

Mennonite Property Casualty Group is a new joint venture of Mennonite-related property and casualty associations. Its board will consist of representatives from each of the companies involved plus two members designated by the Mennonite Church General Board. The group hopes to have a CEO employed by Oct. 1.

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Positive depictions of religion on network television in the United States outnumbered negative depictions almost two-to-one last year, according to the Media Research Center's second annual study of religion on TV. *Christian Courier* reports that the study found entertainment shows far more likely to discuss religion than news shows. The portrayal of religion on entertainment shows rose from 116 incidents in 1993 to 253 in 1994. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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The Commission on Overseas Mission will give $12,000 to a former Mennonite mission congregation in Puyang, China, to help repair the church's roof. General Conference missionaries helped to start the Gospel Church in Puyang. The structure (built in 1917), particularly the roof, badly needs repair. The church's elders asked for money to rebuild the roof. Todd Friesen, China Educational Exchange program coordinator in Beijing, told them that "Mennonites believe in matching local initiative rather than bankrolling entire projects." Most of the people who attend the church are middle-aged or elderly farmers and women, all without much income. But about 100 people came to a prayer meeting called by the elders on Feb. 23. The meeting resulted in an offering of 50,000 yuan (nearly $6,000 U.S.) to fix the roof, plus donations of more than five tons of grain and a large quantity of cooking oil. A building committee has been formed, and work on the roof has already begun.

MINISTERS

Eldon Epp was installed as pastor at Manhattan (Kan.) Church Sept. 17.

Robert Kaufman began Sept. 1 as pastor intern at First Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Weldon Martens will be installed Sept. 10 as pastor at Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb.

Thinagar Sitther is half-time pastor at Bethel Church, Hammon, Okla.

Royce Vogt is half-time youth minister at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan.

WORKERS

Brad Born has been named assistant professor of English at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Rojean DuBois has been named assistant professor of nursing at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Mary Franz, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., began a one-year MVS term July 5 as a bookkeeper and community developer in Dallas, Texas.

Charlene Krahn, Herschel (Sask.) Ebenfeld Church, began a one-year MVS term July 30 as a homework room program assistant in Cincinnati.

Don Lemons returns as associate professor of physics at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., after a three-year leave.

Ryan Loewer, Branch, La., began a two-year MVS term Aug. 14 as a research assistant with the Government Accountability Project in Seattle.

John Mathias has been named assistant professor of mathematics at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Carol Moore has been named associate professor of nursing at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Tom Niermann has been named instructor in history for 1995-96 at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. He is a sabbatical replacement for **James Juhnke**.

George Papageorgiou has been named head football coach and assistant professor of health management and human ecology at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Martha Peterka has been named assistant professor of Spanish at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Ami Regier has been named assistant professor of English at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Amy Rupp, Faith Evangelical Bible Church, Dallas, Ore., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 14 as a respite care provider.

Gabriela Vega, Iglesia Oasis de Esperanza, San Jose, Costa Rica, began a one-year MVS term July 1 as a teacher's assistant at a day care in Hutchinson, Kan.

Brian Wiebe has been named assistant professor of music at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Shannon Wiens, Santa Maria, Calif., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 14 as a kindergarten teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Celeste Williams, Twelfth Avenue Baptist Church, Emporia, Kan., began a one-year MVS term June 3 at El Centro in Kansas City, Kan.

Franz

Krahn

Loewer

Rupp

Vega

Wiens

Williams

Wittig

Gary Wittig, Berlin (Ohio) Church, began a one-year MVS term Aug. 7 as a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Kirsten Zerger has been named director of the Kansas Peace Institute and Lecture Series at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Richard Zerger has been named professor of chemistry at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Moving?

Don't leave us behind. Let us know. Contact **The Mennonite**, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

When making your will consider the General Conference Mennonite Church as a beneficiary. Call for a free booklet to aid in collecting information for your attorney.

Telephone **Gary Franz at (316) 283-5100** or write **GCMC, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Journalism Scholarships

Each year the Evangelical Press Association awards several scholarships to deserving students. We are now taking applications for the 1996/97 year.

Awards are made to undergraduates in their second or third year who are planning on a career in print journalism.

Completed applications must be received by March 1, 1996.

epa EVANGELICAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

Foothills Mennonite Church is seeking a full-time **pastoral leader**. We are a dynamic, urban church with an active membership of over 200. The role of the pastor includes the following:

- to provide a caring, compassionate and conciliatory ministry
- to provide spiritual direction to the congregation
- to participate in a teaching and preaching ministry
- to engage in an equipping ministry, affirming and encouraging the gifts and abilities of individual members and groups
- to work with worship committees in planning meaningful, integrated worship experiences
- to demonstrate a strong Anabaptist faith

Inquiries and resumes should be sent to **Pastoral Search Committee, Foothills Mennonite Church, 2115 Urbana Road N.W., Calgary, AB T2N 4B9.** Screening of applications will begin Nov. 15 and will continue until the position is filled.

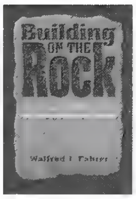
Goshen College seeks applicants for **campus minister** beginning Aug. 1, 1996. Qualifications include doctorate (M.Div. acceptable) in areas directly related to campus ministries and prior work experience in ministry as pastor, teacher or pastoral counselor. Responsibilities include oversight of chapel and community voluntary service, pastoral care, assisting students in finding meaningful congregational life, and planning and administration of seminars and workshops. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply send a resume and three letters of reference to **Norman Kauffmann, Dean of Students, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.** Applications will be received until **Oct. 15.**

Rock Solid Reading

Building on the Rock

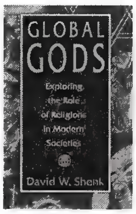
by **Walfred J. Fahrer**



Today many regard the church as hypocritical and irrelevant. Fahrer helps in reclaiming core themes of a biblical and Mennonite vision of being church together. Here is a challenge for both longtime Mennonites and disciples of all backgrounds.
Paper, 128 pages, $7.95; in Canada $11.35.

Global Gods

by **David W. Shenk**



Global Gods is a fresh approach to comparative religions. It is a substantial contribution to the developing literature and widespread interest concerning the role of religion in human society. In an increasingly pluralistic world, the global issues explored are not only theoretical but have practical urgency.
Paper, 392 pages, $16.95; in Canada $24.25.

Available through your local bookstore or by calling 1 800 759-4447; in Canada call 519 746-2872 (Provident Bookstores—MC, Visa, Discover). If ordering by mail, please include 10% for shipping—minimum $2.50. Canadian customers, add 7% of total for GST.

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General secretary for the **General Conference Mennonite Church**

Wanted: nominations and/or applications for general secretary position, open in 1996

Qualifications: strong administrative skills, including personnel and finances; inter-Mennonite experience; knowledge of GCMC churches in Canada and the United States; seminary education; ability to articulate a vision for leading the GCMC into a new century of unity and mission, including ability to obtain support and confidence in the conference

Send profile along with name and address **before Oct. 15** to Darrell Fast, moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 364, North Newton, KS 67117-0364.

General Conference Mennonite Church

Reviews

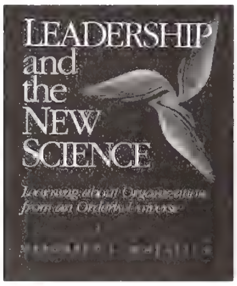
BOOKS

NEW SCIENCE, NEW CHURCH

Leadership and the New Science *by Margaret J. Wheatley (Berrett-Koehler, 1994, 166 pages)*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Wheatley's "chart book" overviews questions raised by modern science and their possible application on understanding and managing organizations. Its visionary approach offers many insights for potential application in the church.



A Mennonite pastor recommended the book to me, saying it had changed the way he viewed his role as church leader. Written primarily for the business management community, the book's themes speak to questions faced by congregational and denominational leaders in troubled or transitional times.

Wheatley has read extensively in the literature of popularized new science. She introduces her readers to the worlds of quantum physics, chaos theory, self-organizing systems and strange attractors. The scientific insights become points of departure to meditations on our understandings of our world and our organizations' places in it.

She encourages her readers to move their management styles away from determinism toward efforts to accommodate diversity, even chaos, as part of organizational evolution. "If we succeed in maintaining focus, rather than hands-on control, we also create the flexibility and responsiveness every organization craves. What leaders are called to do in a chaotic world is to shape their organizations through concepts, not through elaborate rules or structures."

Wheatley sees an inherent ability of organizations to evolve with changing times. The key for leadership is to incorporate emerging patterns into institutional identity rather than trying to shore up old structures against change. As Mennonite denominations look to new structures over the coming years, Wheatley's insights could help focus a way of thinking about change.

The book is a quick read. It is an overview book, raising more questions than it answers. It stops short of detailing a management method of the future.

But it does offer a new way of seeing institutional change. And it touches on the theological implications of the new science, implications that could be spun out by church leaders wanting to understand God's presence in a changing church.

RETHINKING LEADERSHIP

Understanding Ministerial Leadership, *edited by John A. Esau (Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1995, 123 pages)*

Reviewed by Marvin Zehr, Newton, Kan.

Our Anabaptist concept of the priesthood of all believers has become a foundational point for theology and practice of ministry in the Mennonite church. But this concept has not been seriously challenged as to its place and accuracy in Anabaptist history. *Understanding Ministerial Leadership* presents that challenge.

This book brings together essays written by people who draw from their personal experience in ministry. While each essay was written for particular audiences, they fit together well here. The preface to the book says that "what unites these essays is an underlying assumption that the existing theology of ministry which has dominated the Mennonite church for at least a third of the 20th century has not served us well."

An important contribution of the book is its reclaiming both function and "office" as essential to pastoral ministry. While the role of lay ministry continues to be affirmed, the place of the trained, professional minister is more clearly identified and reclaimed.

The two women writers make important contributions. Drawing from personal experience in ministry and research, they share important understandings of the experience of women in ministry. Women tend to experience a deep sense of inner call to ministry. However, the external supports for that call have not been present as they have been for men. The implications of this for women are spelled out in the book.

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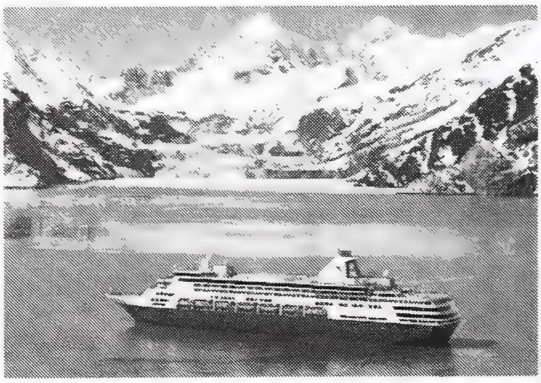

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This is a timely book. It comes in a time when the institution of the church, particularly its leadership, is facing a crisis. Emphasis on community in the church has resulted in less emphasis on strong leadership. However, as one of the writers suggests, "Strong community is not in antithesis to strong leadership." This book can become a resource for us to regain an emphasis on leadership that does not depend on control.

This book will be helpful for pastors as they continue to find their role, in the classroom, where future pastors are being trained, as a resource for people considering ministry, and for both women and men as they seek to understand the issues women face in the ministry.

MORALITY OF DEATH

Euthanasia: Moral and Pastoral Perspectives *by Richard M. Gula (Paulist Press, 1994, 68 pages)*

Reviewed by Willard S. Krabill, M.D., Goshen, Ind.

Father Gula is professor of moral theology at St. Patrick Seminary in Menlo Park, Calif. He is a pastor, teacher and author. His purpose here is to identify the main features of the visions and values shaping the euthanasia debate, especially those upheld by the Catholic tradition. Although the book takes a Catholic perspective, Mennonites will find much in common with the arguments against euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide.

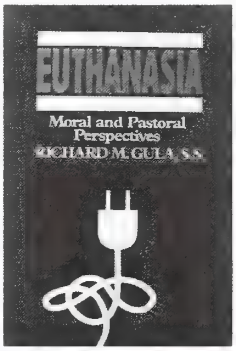
This is a concise book, an excellent overview of the euthanasia debate, written from a Christian perspective. The first chapter summarizes the arguments for and against euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide. The next three chapters examine the arguments from the perspectives of personal autonomy, the prohibition against killing, and beneficence.

The final chapter is a pastoral response to the euthanasia movement, a chapter that tries to "walk the talk." In it Gula identifies the virtues that uphold the spiritual life needed if the case against euthanasia is to be credible. There is an appendix, *The Declaration on Euthanasia* from the Vatican, June 26, 1980.

In the first two lines of the opening chapter, Gula says, "The easiest way to skew this debate is to see it as a 'pulling the plug' issue. It is not." He goes on to say the debate, and the book, *is* about voluntary active euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide. I agree that physician-assisted suicide is not morally different from euthanasia. I also support the author in the belief that foregoing disproportionately burdensome treatment is not the same as euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide.

In understandable terms, Gula assails individual freedom and rights as a supreme value. He appeals to our Christian belief in divine sovereignty, human stewardship and a focus on the common good. "The fundamental distinction between Creator and created sets limits on our freedom. …" Expressions of personal freedom (including the way we die) must be assessed with their social implications. Legal euthanasia, says Gula, would weaken the general prohibition in our society against killing.

Mennonites will have trouble with Gula's interpretation of the biblical injunction, "You shall not kill." He says it does not prohibit killing in general, but the arbitrary taking of life by an individual, private decision, without community sanction. I would ask, "What if society would sanction/legalize euthanasia?" (This book was written in 1994, before the referendum in Oregon approving physician-assisted suicide and before the Pope's recent calling into question prior Catholic stances on capital punishment and war.)



Apart from these minor detractions, I found this an excellent summary of the Christian case against euthanasia. Especially helpful was the treatment of suffering. "The foundation for finding meaning in suffering lies in the dignity of the human person, fashioned in God's image; a dignity not lost even when we are diminished by disease and pain." The book also challenges us to be the kind of people and community we should be in order to encourage people to view death as an inevitable outcome that no one needs to hasten through lethal intervention.

I recommend this book for everyone who expects to die—and especially those who are in a position to influence the euthanasia debate: pastors, nurses, physicians and others.

Resources

- **Mennonite Entrepreneurs** by Calvin Redekop, Stephen C. Ainlay and Robert Siemens (Johns Hopkins, 1995, $34.95 U.S.) offers insights from 100 interviews with Mennonite entrepreneurs into the conflicts and tensions in adapting to the modern world.
- **Flatlands** by Jeff Gundy, Bluffton (Ohio) College professor, is a collection of poems. It is available from Cleveland State University Poetry Center, Rhodes Tower, Room 1815, Cleveland, OH 44115, for $10 U.S.
- **Snake in the Parsonage** by Jean Janzen (Good Books, 1995, $9.95 U.S.) is Janzen's fourth book of poetry and includes the poems for which she received the Creative Writing Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.
- **The Catalog**, published by Mennonite Media Ministries, contains listings of the videos they offer, including the *Beyond the News* series. For a free copy of the catalog call 1-800-999-3534.
- **Moving Toward the Mainstream: 20th Century Change Among the Brethren of Eastern Pennsylvania** by Donald R. Fitzkee (Good Books, 1995, $9.95 U.S.) focuses on the cultural changes of the Church of the Brethren in the past 90 years.
- **That They May Be One: Christian Churches in the Middle East** (29-minute video) looks at Middle Eastern Christians' worship, work and relationships with mission groups. Contact MCC Akron at (717) 859-1151.
- **Going Home: A Family Facing AIDS** (30-minute video) is a docudrama in which four members of a rural family describe their reactions to a younger son just diagnosed with AIDS. Available from MCC British Columbia through the Columbia Resource Center, (604) 853-3358.

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Editorial

First at the cradle, last at the cross

While voices surround us denigrating "welfare queens" and "feminist rhetoric," the silence of those speaking on behalf of the poor and of women is deafening.

Witness the Fourth World Conference on Women held near Beijing in early September. The Chinese government exercised its muscle to try to muzzle messages coming from that historic gathering. Officials denied visas to many women, moved the conference outside of Beijing, which complicated transportation and access to media, and repeatedly hassled participants.

The Chinese weren't alone. Burma, ruled ruthlessly by a military junta, sent a man as its delegate. James Dobson, an American evangelical, called this conference "the greatest threat to the family in history."

Nevertheless, voices emerged.

Hillary Clinton's was one. She offered a plea for treating women's rights as human rights, and she listed numerous examples from various countries of violations of such rights. She concluded thus: "As long as discrimination and inequities remain so commonplace around the world—as long as girls and women are valued less, fed less, fed last, overworked, underpaid, not schooled and subjected to violence in and out of their homes—the potential of the human family to create a peaceful, prosperous world will not be realized."

The Gospel reading in the lectionary for Aug. 27 was Luke 13:10-17, the story of Jesus healing a crippled woman. Jesus is teaching in the synagogue, where a wall separates the women from the men. Jesus bridges that division and says to the woman, "You are set free from your ailment." He lays his hands on her, and she is healed. The leader of the synagogue is "indignant" that Jesus heals on the Sabbath, let alone that he touches a woman. Jesus rebukes the religious leaders, who give more care to their animals, he says, than to this woman.

Dorothy Sayers, in her small book *Are Women Human?*, wrote, "It is no wonder that the women were first at the Cradle and last at the Cross. They had never known a man like this." Jesus' attitude toward women was unique.

Military budget: The backlash against women applies to the poor as well, most of whom are women and children. The U.S. and Canadian governments are looking to make further cuts in aid to poor families. Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress this summer increased the military budget beyond what the Pentagon even asked.

Jesus brought dignity and hope to afflicted people, including women, which in his time was radical and risky.

Betty Detwiler Sommer, who teaches social work at Bluffton (Ohio) College, writes in Mennonite Central Committee's *Women's Concerns Report* (September-October issue) that the rhetoric about welfare is based on myths and false assumptions. She writes that "70 percent of [U.S.] families on AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children] leave the program within two years. Half leave within one year." She also points out that "in a typical [U.S.] state, the maximum cash grant for a family of three is $367 per month, far below the federal poverty line of [$932]." Meanwhile, "inflation-adjusted AFDC benefits have decreased by 45 percent since 1970," she writes.

Some people think that churches should pick up the slack while government help drops back. However, as Ron Sider says in an editorial in *Christianity Today* (Sept. 11), "If there are substantial cuts in government spending against poverty, private agencies will be overwhelmed by added costs and logistics of providing aid." We may be heading in the direction of the former Soviet Union, where a few courageous people are working to bring a semblance of justice to people in need (see pages 5-9 of this issue).

Jesus brought dignity and hope to afflicted people, including women, which in his time was radical and risky. He gave them a voice, while the ruling powers sought to silence him and them. Let us not put up with such silencing but speak out for a more just and equitable world.
Gordon Houser

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ

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Healthy church, strong colleges (see page 3)

Canadian schools stress Bible (see page 6)

THE MISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

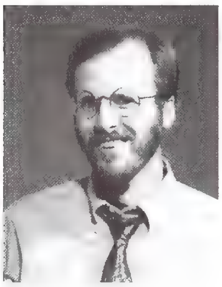
Prologue

School is in full swing, and many of us are involved, if not as students then perhaps as parents or teachers or supporters of one of our church schools. This issue looks at how our church colleges are working to make higher education their mission in creating a healthier church.

Marion Deckert, who serves part-time as secretary for the Higher Education Council of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), helped put this issue together. He also wrote the first article (page 3), which reports the findings of a review team that visited Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and Bluffton (Ohio) College, our two GC-related colleges in the United States.

Aiden Schlichting Enns writes about the GC-related colleges in Canada (page 6). Though each is different, all seek to make their students more faithful Christians in whatever field of study they pursue. These colleges need our prayers.

Gordon Zerbe (page 12) offers an interesting study of Jesus' saying that "the reign of God is like leaven a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until it was all leavened." Your Sunday school class or prayer group may want to discuss this saying.



You may also want to discuss Larry Penner's proposal to integrate Mennonite colleges. See his editorial on the back page. *gh*

Next issue: Addiction: a family problem

Cover: Photo by Vada Snider

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

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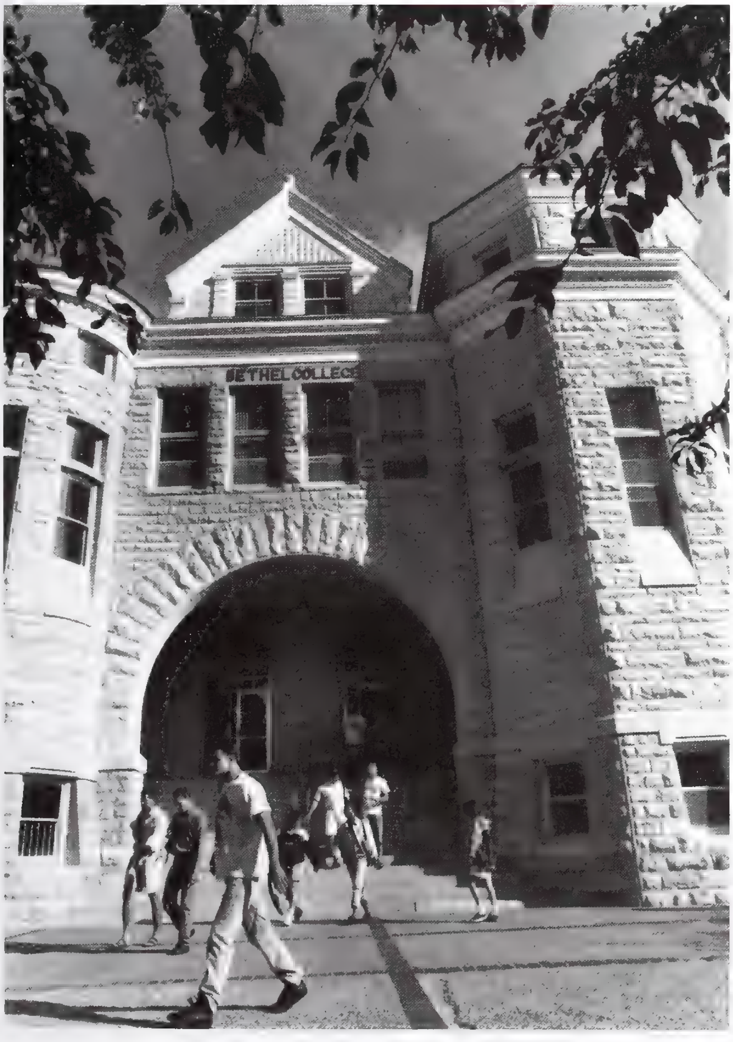
HEALTHY CHURCH, STRONG COLLEGES

Marion Deckert



Vada Snider

'Family nature': *Administration building at Bethel College*

A review team looks at the church-college relationship in the United States.

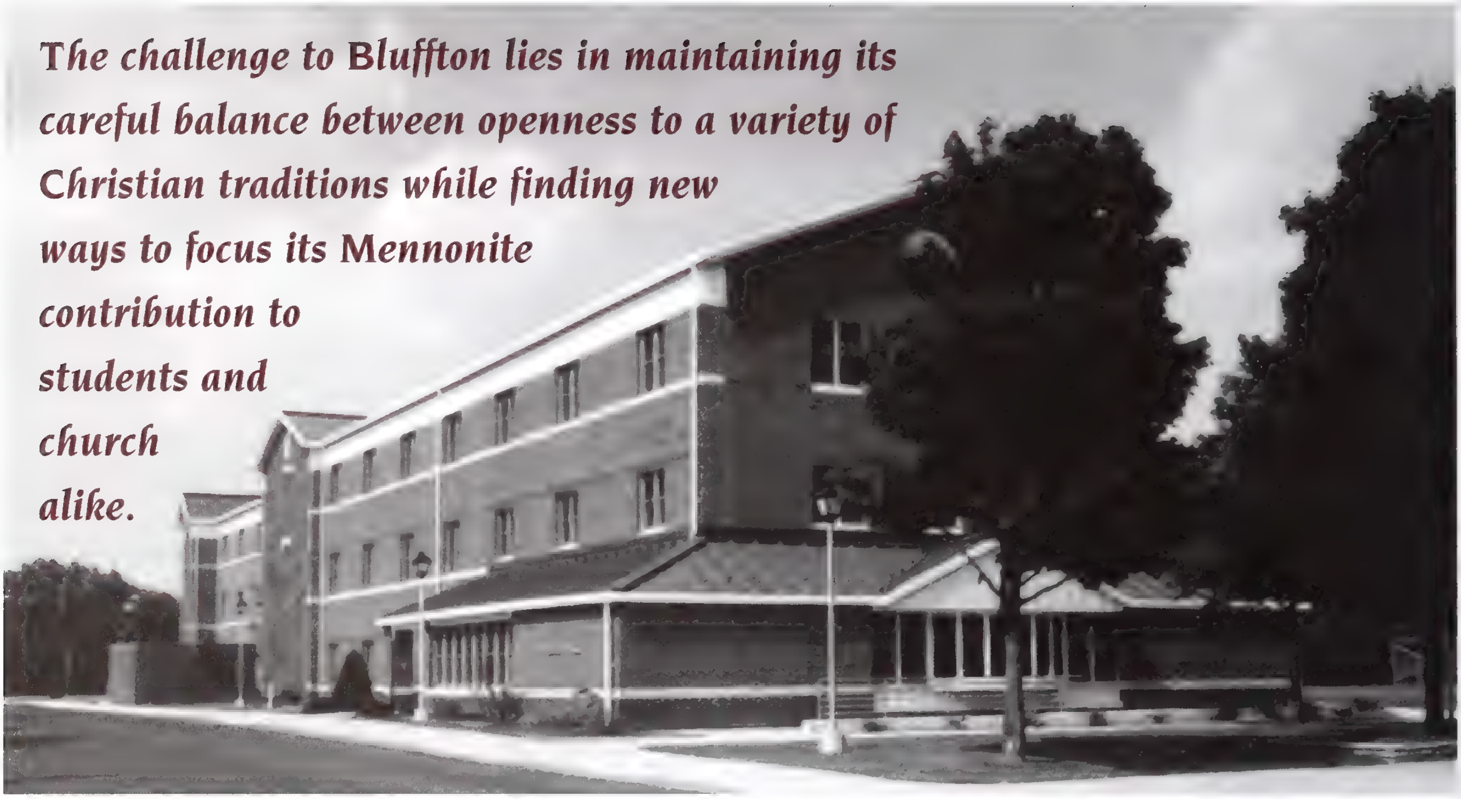
A healthy church requires strong church colleges, and the strength of a church college depends upon a mutually supportive church-college relationship. In January 1994 the General Conference Mennonite Church Higher Education Council (HEC) decided to study the relationship between the church and its U.S. colleges.

The HEC is a consultative body that represents all the General Conference institutions of higher education in Canada and the United States. Canadian colleges are owned and operated by the church, while U.S. colleges are autonomous corporations. Because of this difference, the council agreed to begin with a review of the church-college relationship in the United States.

The review was undertaken by a team of church people from the U.S. districts (Louise Auernheimer, Pacific Southwest and Northwest districts; Darrell Fast, Western

The challenge to Bethel lies in making sure its mission statement clearly reflects the fundamental goals of the college.

The challenge to Bluffton lies in maintaining its careful balance between openness to a variety of Christian traditions while finding new ways to focus its Mennonite contribution to students and church alike.



Contagious spirit of expectation: *Ramseyer Hall, which opened a year ago, is the newest residence hall at Bluffton College.*

District; Ray Hacker, Eastern District; Arlene Holdeman, Northern District; Ruth Naylor, Central District) plus Gerald Gerbrandt (at-large member), Jim Schrag (HEC chair) and Marion Deckert (HEC secretary).

This team of church people visited Bluffton (Ohio) College last February and Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in April. The team focused on the relationship between the college and the church. How do the college programs relate to the mission of the church? How does the church assist the college in its mission? Are the teachings and practices of the college and the church fundamentally the same? How does the church stay in conversation with the college? What kind of church presence should there be in the student body, faculty and board?

HEALTHY CHURCH, STRONG COLLEGES

Bluffton College report: Bluffton attempts to be an "Anabaptist college open to all." It sees itself as a peace church college in an evangelical setting. The mission of the college is designed to welcome a variety of Christian traditions while keeping its Mennonite heritage at its core.

The team was impressed with the college's sense of identity. This clear self-understanding explains its energy, cohesiveness and the contagious spirit of expectation that is evident on campus.

The challenge to Bluffton lies in maintaining its careful balance between openness to a variety of Christian traditions while finding new ways to focus its Mennonite contribution to students and church alike.

Due to the small numbers in its surrounding Mennonite community, coupled with its broad appeal to a variety of students, less than a fifth of Bluffton's students are Mennonite.

Bethel College report: Bethel, on the other hand, resides in the center of a large Mennonite community. The college has a family character; second- and third-generation students are common.

Despite its close relationship with its supporting congregations, the team observed a curious lack of clarity in Bethel's description of its relationship to the church. The team wondered if this lack of clarity was a by-product of the "family nature" of the college. It seemed that describing the college-church relationship was like a fish trying to describe water.

Bethel's self-understanding hinges on a pride in academic excellence that encourages free and critical thinking by students. The team observed that these goals may not be distinctly Anabaptist or Mennonite in themselves but noted that these goals have been used in the service of the church.

The challenge to Bethel lies in making sure its mission statement clearly reflects the fundamental goals of the college. It also needs to take note of the meaning of its shrinking Mennonite student enrollment. Once predominantly Mennonite, now less than half of the student body comes from Mennonite churches.

Observations: Members of the review team made many observations during the course of the five days spent on the two campuses. Among them were these:

- "Being here on campus as a review team says that the church cares."
- "The fact that students were able to leave coats and things on the hall floor unattended was remarkable to me."
- "This is a place where you can be yourself. Speaking theologically, there is some grace here."
- "It is impressive that there is this caliber of faculty with the low pay scale; it shows real dedication."
- "At so many places it is like being in a family."

The complete Bluffton and Bethel reports are available in the "Higher Education Council Church-College Review Report." (Write to Marion Deckert, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.) The review process reinforced these more general points:

- Both Bluffton and Bethel are strongly committed to their church identity.
- The review process helped overcome a sense that the church does not concern itself much with its colleges.
- In the process of conducting the reviews, all participants realized in a new way the importance of the church-college relationship.
- Review team members gained a new appreciation for the complexities of maintaining church-related colleges.
- Both Bethel and Bluffton are excellent schools that church members can be proud of.
- The most important and hardest part of improving the church-college relationship is raising the level of interest and concern on the church side.
- Difficulties and challenges noted in the reports will become agenda for the HEC in the months ahead.

Marion Deckert serves part-time as secretary for the Higher Education Council and teaches philosophy at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. He is a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton.

Enrollment figures for 1995-96

	Total	Full-time
Bethel College:	613	539
Bluffton College:	1,030	928

A BURDEN FOR JUSTICE

My life has been changed by attending Bluffton College, especially by spending a term in Poland last spring. I'm now interested in politics and world affairs. Poland is no longer a backward country on the other side of the world. Russians are no longer "bad" people. I see how I can live with much less, and I feel a burden to deal with social injustices of poverty and inequality and violence. I have thought about my relationship to God and to others, and while in Poland I made a commitment to being a pacifist. I now feel as if I have neighbors in Eastern Europe, and we are commanded to love our neighbors. This experience has matured me, and I feel ready to explode with information to share with others. *Amy Babcock*

SERVE GOD WITH A WILLING MIND

Bethel College has taught me that a love for classical learning goes hand in hand with developing a faith in God. With the interface of faith and intellect at Bethel, I have learned that I can welcome truth from whatever source it may come. I do not have to be afraid that any real truth, from any source, will interfere with the divine truth that comes by inspiration from God. Bethel College has made the difference for me by challenging me to serve my God with a willing mind. *Ryan Loewer*

Intimate community: *Conrad Grebel College campus*

CANADIAN SCHOOLS STRESS BIBLE

Mennonite colleges in Canada emphasize preparing leaders for church-related work.

Aiden Schlichting Enns

The word "Bible" is the basic difference between Mennonite higher education in Canada and in the United States. Three of the four General Conference Mennonite Church colleges in Canada have the word "Bible" in their names. The exception is Conrad Grebel College (CGC), named after an early Anabaptist.

Canadian schools are primarily about preparing professional or lay leaders for church-related work. U.S. schools, on the other hand, offer students more in the area of liberal arts and training for other professions (e.g., history, philosophy, English, nursing and education).

The second greatest difference between American and Canadian education is the cost—due to the difference in the value of the dollar.

"It's a lot more inexpensive for a young person to come to Canada and take a couple of years at Columbia Bible College (CBC) or Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) and transfer back to a school [in the United States] … about a third less," says CBC president Wally Unger from his office in Clearbrook, B.C.

There are 10 Mennonite post-secondary institutions in Canada. Of these, three are General Conference-related (GC), two are Mennonite Brethren-related (MB), one MB and GC, three are inter-Mennonite and one is Mennonite Church-related (for GC colleges, see chart on page 7).

Smaller student body

Whereas Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) and Bluffton (Ohio) College each have over 500 students, Canadian schools range from 21 at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute (SCBI) to 277 at CBC (see chart on page 7). Hildi Froese Tiessen, dean and interim president at CGC in Waterloo, Ont., considers this an advantage. CGC is a Mennonite-owned college located on the campus of the University of Waterloo (student population 16,000). The college has a 113-bed student residence and regular fellowship meals with staff, faculty and associate college students.

"You have the benefit of an incredibly powerful, intimate community, living here on the edge of the campus of a major secular university," says Froese Tiessen.

At CGC community meals, held Wednesday nights during the school year, about 170 people gather to eat together and share a half-hour program.

U.S. ***colleges have a greater emphasis on liberal arts and professional courses. Canadian schools focus more on theology and church music.***

Students fall 1995

CBC: 277 full-time, 73 part-time
CGC: 112 residents, 69 associate students
CMBC: 127 full-time, 24 part-time
SCBI: 21 full-time, no part-time

Canadian Mennonite colleges

CBC: Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C.
CGC: Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.
CMBC: Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg
SCBI: Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute

Theology over liberal arts

U.S. colleges have a greater emphasis on liberal arts and professional courses. Canadian schools focus more on theology and church music.

"We take people who are prepared for university-level education and prepare them for participation in the church," says Adolf Ens, interim dean at CMBC in Winnipeg.

Even though CMBC is officially recognized as a teaching center of the University of Manitoba, it strives to make the academic studies hit home in a congregational setting.

"Our theology degree requires a significant input of practical theology. … If one of our music graduates cannot accompany church congregational singing, I'm embarrassed, even though the person can play Mozart beautifully," says Ens.

CGC is closest to the U.S. liberal-arts model because it teaches a wide range of arts courses in addition to theology and music. Furthermore, its students are registered as university students, not Bible college students.

CMBC is also not a traditional "Bible college" because of its official status as a university teaching center. But because of its distance from the university, it feels like a college on its own.

Unlike the above two schools, CBC has not aggressively pursued university affiliation. It prefers to retain a focus on training in Bible and the Christian life.

Not a traditional Bible college: *Canadian Mennonite Bible College campus*

A school benefits from church ownership because the conference assumes the burden of a financial loss, if any.

Degrees offered

CBC: Bachelor of Religious Education (four years, five different majors, including early childhood education and community support services), one-year certificate, two-year diploma

CGC: Offers no undergraduate degrees—offers courses in peace and conflict studies and music courses and undergraduate courses in seven other areas

CMBC: Bachelor of Theology (three years, three majors including youth ministry and church music), Bachelor of Church Music (three years, two majors)

SCBI: Diploma (two years, two areas: biblical studies and vocational studies)

Ownership

CBC: Owned jointly by the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia and the Mennonite Brethren provincial conference

CGC: Owned by the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada

CMBC: Owned by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada

SCBI: Owned jointly by the Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan and Conference of Mennonites of Alberta

"We are strong in training laity for ministry," says Unger, who has been at CBC for 26 years, half that time as president.

SCBI, which offers a two-year diploma in either biblical studies or vocational studies, sees itself as a discipleship training program in which students are evaluated not only on performance in the classroom but in residence life as well.

"We think the unique thing we offer on the General Conference educational scene is vocational studies," says SCBI president Ray Friesen. "We seek to connect with university [studies], vocational courses, high school upgrading/completion and work experience."

Church ownership

Without exception, all the Canadian GC schools are wholly owned by church groups (see chart on this page). There is a difference between a school owned by a corporation of Mennonites and one owned by a Mennonite conference, says Ens, whose college is owned and operated by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. "Our programs are geared more consciously to function in the context of the church," he says.

A school benefits from church ownership because the conference assumes the burden of a financial loss, if any.

Disadvantages include a cumbersome decision-making process and no place for those who disagree with the college, says SCBI president Ray Friesen. SCBI is owned by the Saskatchewan and Alberta conferences. Friesen says these are among the reasons his institute is in the process of separating from the conferences and becoming a separate entity.

"In the future the plan is to form a corporation. This is not unusual for churches—for example, Mennonite Central Committee is a corporation," says Friesen. This allows individuals from other churches and conferences to lend their support as well.

CGC is entirely owned by the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada. That conference pays only about 10 percent of the school's annual budget. Because CGC is a teaching college for the University of Waterloo, 90 percent of the budget comes from government grants and student tuition. "We are therefore affected by government cuts to education," says Froese Tiessen.

Increased cooperation in Winnipeg

CMBC is one of three Mennonite colleges located in Winnipeg. The others are Concord College, formerly known as Mennonite Brethren Bible College and owned by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren conference, and Menno Simons College, an independent, inter-Mennonite school on the campus of the University of Winnipeg.

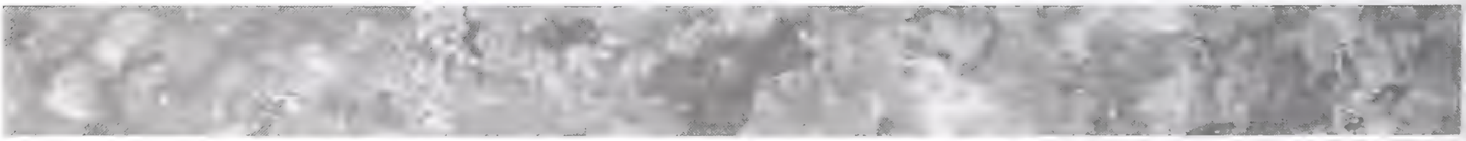
Concord, located about 10 miles from CMBC, is exploring the possibility of acquiring government property next to CMBC.

"On both sides [Concord and CMBC] we have strongly reaffirmed that if we were in close proximity we would integrate significantly larger portions of our programs," says Ens. He adds that Concord and CMBC have a long history of program cooperation.

Menno Simons College, an inner-city college with no student residence, has joined Concord and CMBC in sponsoring a study on the feasibility of future cooperation. Menno Simons offers courses and degrees in social and economic development and conflict resolution.

Later this year, Concord College will know whether or not it can acquire the land next to CMBC. If that happens, it would not move before 1999.

Aiden Schlichting Enns is the Manitoba provincial editor for Mennonite Reporter*, and communications coordinator at Canadian Mennonite Bible College.*



AFFIRMATIVE COMMUNITY

My three years at Canadian Mennonite Bible College encouraged me to think critically and cultivate a lifestyle in keeping with my theological ideals. I worked to meet rigorous academic demands and examine the principles set forth in the Bible, the church and society.

I also worked, together with other CMBC students, to create a community that is an alternative to the status quo. For example, there was some theft on campus during my first year. Instead of focusing on retribution, the whole community was challenged to consider the principles of healing relationships and rehabilitating the offender.

CMBC has inspired me to view the world with new thoughtfulness and compassion. *Valerie Smith*

BALANCE IN MY LIFE

Living at Conrad Grebel College has helped me maintain balance in my life when it would have been easy to become preoccupied with the pressures of university. It has been eye-opening to interact with people from various backgrounds and university disciplines. Conversations, courses and chapel services have challenged my thinking and my faith to exciting new growth. I have had much opportunity to test my gifts and interests through involvement in the chapel program, choir and student council. My life at university has been enriched by friendships and experiences at Conrad Grebel. *Janine Wideman*

FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

Studying at Swift Current Bible Institute has meant connecting faith and knowledge. Growing in faith and gaining knowledge are not dependent on each other, yet they go together well. Learning in class about the grace of God does not build my faith. However, being educated in the doctrines of my faith does explain why I believe what is in my heart.

To study at SCBI has meant connecting heart and mind. This connection has raised questions and revealed doubts about faith, church, ourselves. Study of this kind, where no answer could be given, was perhaps the best. It was a reminder that there are things we will not understand until God chooses to reveal them. Though knowledge is limited, faith can be unlimited.

Studying at SCBI has meant connecting faith and knowledge to allow for the opportunity of heart and mind to work toward the same end. As I move from SCBI, I pray that the connection is not broken. *Heidi Vincent*

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

- What makes a Mennonite college "Mennonite"?
- Should our colleges be owned by the church or by separate corporations?
- How would you improve the church-college relationship?

Write to **The Mennonite**, P.O. Box 347,
Newton, KS 67114; fax (316) 283-0454;
e-mail CompuServe 72147,2746.

Letters

BE CAREFUL IN USING BIBLE

I wish to comment on the Bible article entitled "Fire From Heaven in 1995?" by John Stoner (July 25 issue, page 10).

1. I question whether the nuclear bomb is indeed analogous to "calling down fire from heaven" in the passage (Luke 9:51-55). In the biblical text "fire from heaven" is understood as an expression of divine legitimation for the person on whose behalf it appears. As such, it is the opposite of the research, development and active implementation reflected in the nuclear arsenal. To oversimplify, for the disciples fire from heaven means God's action and the beholder's inaction; for us, a nuclear bomb reflects human action and God's inaction or lack of intervention.

2. The disciples do not suggest fire from heaven to be the "necessary and effective" means of responding to evil but rather as a confirmation of Jesus' calling. The disciples do not seek divine fire as a means of conflict resolution but rather seek the fire as an unmistakable sign of Jesus' divine authority.

3. The disciples firmly base their petition to call down fire from heaven in the Messianic identity of their friend and colleague, not for use when they feel "threatened or offended," as Stoner suggests. The text states that the disciples' question comes in response to Jesus' rejection by the Samaritans. In it they seek both a confirmation of their own conviction as well as an incontrovertible sign to dispel the disbelief of others. Such a miracle would be significant because of its nature as a "sign," not as a means of self-defense.

I appreciate Stoner's intention to allow the biblical text to inform our current beliefs, and agree wholeheartedly with the importance of providing an alternative perspective to the 50th anniversary of the Hiroshima tragedy. When doing so, however, let us remain extremely careful in using the biblical text to support our peace positions. *Derek Suderman, Winnipeg*

JUST SAY NO TO TELEVISION

I appreciated that *The Mennonite* focused on television in its Aug. 8 issue. Nancy Witmer's article, "Hooked on Soaps," and James Klassen's poem, "Beware mean dog," were particularly valuable.

The two lead articles, "Watch Out for the Power of Pictures" and "Media and Violence" are appropriate in analysis of detail but miss the overall picture—they fail to discern the forest from the trees. This is a malady all too common to those who watch television. In two places in the issue there are photos of individuals watching the tube with exhortations to "Be aware of the myths ... " and "Reading the myths ... ." These are multimedia oxymorons.

The concluding paragraph of the first article reads in part (and is emphasized by the editor as a pull-quote), "Only when we learn to read these myths on a daily basis will we have the power to substitute other motivating ideas and goals of our choosing." Say what? Does one need also a daily fix of heroin to appreciate the more subtle joy of the grace of God? How about a daily dose of pornography to appreciate your spouse?

Television is the most pervasive and destructive addiction in the world. There is no doubt in my mind that the Apostle Paul would rail against it if it had been present 2,000 years ago. I'm not suggesting that those addicted should be expelled from a church congregation or that a church allowing membership to a television watcher should be expelled from a conference, but I believe that habitual television watching is a sin, and those sinners should know how I feel about it. Just say no. *Edward P. Dick, Redwood Valley, Calif.*

WE DON'T NEED A GUILT TRIP

It is difficult for me to understand John Stoner's theory in his article "The Burden of Hiroshima" (July 25 issue): The dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima has resulted directly in violence we are experiencing in the United States at the present time—even the tragedy in Oklahoma City.

The evils Stoner speaks of are first mentioned in the Book of Genesis: murder, deceit, rebellion. It's all there. Immorality and violent behavior by people and nations against each other have been going on since Day One.

It would be interesting for Stoner to write a "What if." Maybe he can come up with an article describing, in his opinion, the condition of the world today had the bomb not been used.

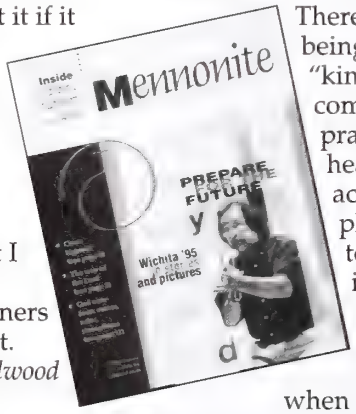
The decision to use the bomb, whatever one chooses to believe—right or wrong—was made by humans. God gave humans the know-how to use atomic energy. God allowed the bomb to be dropped. As far as we know, the United States is the first and only nation to use the atomic bomb in war, and it has not been used since.

War is awful and terrible. People get killed in war. God promised in Isaiah 2:4, "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

We do not need a guilt trip by Stoner. *Janice Sudbery, Pekin, Ill.*

WICHITA '95

So often I have looked back to times when my husband and I sat in the midst of a conference—in our land or in other lands—in General Conference sessions or in world conferences. There is something in being together with "kindred spirits," coming together to praise our God, to hear what was accomplished, to plan for the future, to share, to be inspired, to meet friends in a larger fellowship.



I remember when at one time the saying was out, "Only the rich can go to conference." I thought, It is exactly the opposite. Looking inward, I knew the poor and needy had come—the ones feeling empty, thirsty for fresh fountains of water, wanting to learn where the new paths will be—together giving glory to God, our Redeemer who led us this far as a people and who would lead us on. So poor we felt as we looked back on attainments, so prayerful as in our need we looked forward to new revelations.

I want to thank you for the Aug. 22

issue. Health kept me from attending Wichita '95, but now I know in part who was there and how the Spirit worked. I could join "On the Road with Jesus." *Joanna S. Andres, Hesston, Kan.*

With 93 percent of GCs and 73 percent of MCs voting in favor, it would seem that integration has an overwhelming support.

However, is the 20 percent difference significant? Amalgamation can be a political act, or be reduced to one, or it can provide opportunity for unity. Since one can find a variety of beliefs in almost any local Mennonite church, unity will be much more difficult to achieve. The goal should be not only unity or political amalgamation, but oneness in the Spirit. To achieve such oneness we will have to ask ourselves some difficult and honest questions about the dichotomy between our Confession of Faith and what often happens in our school classrooms, churches and homes.

If Wichita '95 results largely in a new church bureaucracy and we fail to recognize and deal with the spiritual and practical problems of our church we will have accomplished nothing. It is difficult to read a Mennonite publication or hear a sermon without being reminded of these problems—theological confusion and disharmony, contradiction of our professed faith in real life, an increase in the criticism of the Scriptures and rejection of them as authoritative (just written by men), failure to communicate with our neighbors and problems in our homes. We do not read much about Mennonite alcoholism and drug abuse, but I suspect it is there also.

One major problem is indifference. I know of at least one church in which 17 people, less than 20 percent of the membership, showed up for the meeting in which Wichita '95 was discussed and delegates were instructed how to vote. If this happened in other churches, how much of the church does the delegate vote actually represent?

For such major issues we should not be voting at a conference. The overwhelming amount of material covered at such a convention cannot be adequately dealt with. No doubt church leaders and proponents of amalgamation worked the issues through. But the conference was more or less a sales promotion for what all these hard-working people had decided we need.

Church leaders are working cautiously and slowly in implementing the amalgamation process. For this they are to be commended. But it is the involvement of grass-roots members that will give amalgamation a spiritual and communal dynamic.

Such major issues should not be voted on by delegates at a conference. They should be conscientiously discussed for a year or two in congregations and voted on by secret ballot. The results should be counted and sent to a central church office, where the official counting takes place. This could save much money as well.

Let's simplify conferences' business and the many workshops and activities. Let's allow more time to know each other. Smaller conferences or simple worship celebrations could do much to help us achieve unity in the Spirit. The services at Newton and Wichita were among the finest Mennonite experiences I've had. And the 4,000 young people were awesome. *Walfried E. Goossen, Dundas, Ont.*

"All good things must end" (Aug. 22 issue, page 23), but Faith & Life Press' *Hymnal Masterworks* with Tom Harder on classical guitar has extended the ambience of Wichita '95 for many hours in our home over the past month. Appropriately it starts out with "Come, let us all unite to sing!" The CD is particularly for those who weren't swaying in the aisles at the [Kansas] Coliseum.

Thank you for the fine coverage of this momentous conference. *The Dan Baumgartners, Versailles, Mo.*

WHERE IS THE CHURCH?

I owe the Pentagon generals an apology. I've blamed them over the years for driving the arms race. Now I learn the [U.S.] Congress has given them over $7 billion more than they've asked for and wants to force billions more on them for Star Wars research in violation of treaty obligations.

While this goes on the same Congress cuts and slashes almost every program for poor and dispossessed people. Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1) has been turned upside down. The Congress has exalted the mighty and ignored the humble. It has filled the rich with good things and turned the hungry away empty.

Democrats or Republicans—makes no difference—one's as bad as the other. And where is the church? There's hardly been a peep so far.

Is this what the humorist Will Rogers had in mind when he said, "I don't make jokes. I just follow the government and report the facts"?

Oh, I expect he had something lighter in mind. Just the same, it's a brutal joke on the middle and lower classes, while the rich again laugh all the way to the bank.

But don't blame the Pentagon generals. Blame the Congress. *Larry Lange, Devils Lake, N.D.*

TRINITY IS SCRIPTURAL

In response to the letter, "Trinity Not Scriptural," by Jerry C. Stanaway (Aug. 8 issue, page 11), if the Confession of Faith has the words "Trinity" or "triune" in it, then it is scriptural. Anybody denying the Trinity of God is speaking against the Holy Spirit, which will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come (Matthew 12:32). If the writer did not know this, then repentance may be in order.

The writer says the doctrine of the Trinity only became theology in 325 A.D. This is a lie. We find the Trinity in Matthew 28:19-20, which was written in the first century. *Abe Janzen, Coaldale, Alta.*

Ideas your church can try

Zoar Mennonite Church, Langham, Sask., invites its members to display artwork in the church's lounge. For instance, last April and May, Leola Huebert displayed her needlework—cross-stitch, petit point and needlepoint. She also showed her tole paintings, made from the works of the Dutch painter Anton Pecke.

First Mennonite Church, Wadsworth, Ohio, plans a Friendship Sunday each fall to invite friends and neighbors who have no church ties to come to the Sunday morning worship. A carry-in meal is held after the service that Sunday. Members are encouraged to invite people several weeks in advance.

Jesus uses the power of images

A *study of* Matthew 13:44-46 *and* Mark 4:26-32

Gordon Zerbe

One image dominates the preaching and teaching of Jesus: the kingdom of God, God's dynamic reign. The reign of God, according to Jesus, is what we must seek first and above all else. But when teaching about the reign of God, Jesus spins word pictures, riddles, parables, enigmatic sayings. Why?

Jesus understands that what we often need more than information is enhanced imagination—imagination about how we may participate in God's reign (as illustrated in Matthew 13:44-46) and about the boundless utopian possibilities that characterize God's reign (as illustrated in Mark 4:26-32).

One of the shortest, yet most provocative, parable pictures is this: "The reign of God is like leaven a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until it was all leavened" (Matthew 13:33).

What images come to mind as we ponder the daily task of baking bread? One is the impact of a small amount of leaven on a large mass of inert dough.

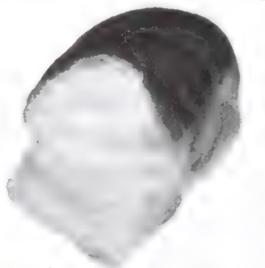
During Mennonite World Conference in Winnipeg in 1990, CBC Radio interviewed Michael Gaard, Mennonite Central Committee peace education worker in Northern Ireland. The interviewer sounded incredulous at the grandiose dreams for peace Michael expressed. The interviewer asked about the size of the Mennonite fellowship in Northern Ireland. Michael said, "less than 10," then added, "but we believe in the bigness of the smallness."

The picture of the woman and the leaven also invites us to consider the "hiddenness" and mystery of the leavening process—the hiddenness and mystery of God's work in the world.

In the first eight years of our marriage, I was the bread maker of the family. But two years ago we were given a bread maker. Throw in the ingredients and, poof, daily home-baked bread. Now I've lost the skill, and we all miss the ambience of Saturday's bread-making aroma. It's hard for me to picture a bread machine as a worthy metaphor for the kingdom—the instantaneous and mechanically managed.

So far so good. But when we put this parable into first-century Palestine, we see even further imaginative possibilities. In fact, this parable was shocking to the original audience.

Impure: In first-century Palestine, leaven was made by taking a piece of bread and storing it in a dark, damp place until mold formed. Leaven was considered impure. It was banned from all grain offerings and from every household during the holy season of Passover. In every pious household at noon the day before Passover the process began of cleansing the house of all impurities, including leavened bread. And so the festival came to be known as the feast of unleavened bread.



In Jewish society, leaven was used as a metaphor for evil things that have powerful effects. It especially symbolized corruption and uncleanness. Jesus uses it this way when he exhorts his disciples, "Beware of the leaven [that is, the corruption] of the Pharisees and Herodians" (Mark 8:15). And Paul uses leaven to describe the sexual immorality of the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 5).

Jesus uses an image of decay and impurity to challenge his listeners into rethinking their ideas about the ways of God.

The provocation continues. In first-century Palestine the man's world was the world of honor and purity; the woman's world was one of dishonor and impurity. Women as a class were considered not only physically but morally and intellectually defective. And so, at the birth of a son there was great fanfare; at the birth of a daughter, business as usual. Women were the ones considered monthly impure and daily tainted with the impurity of such things as leaven. The reign of God comes through people many regarded as impure and dishonorable. It comes by means least expected.

We expect to hear Jesus say, Mix and knead. But he uses, "hide." The imagery of mystery, concealment, corruption and dishonor continues.

"The reign of God is like leaven a woman took and hid in three measures of meal." Three measures is about 40 liters (36 quarts) of meal, which would make enough bread for about 100 people. Bread is normally made in the morning, and only for the day. This huge amount will surely go to waste. But Jesus uses ancient symbols. Three measures is the amount Sarah had used at the epiphany of God's messengers. God's arrival calls for preparations that are extravagant, even wasteful.

Jesus has provoked his audience into new thought, new imaginative vistas. Instead of using expected images of holiness, purity and the sacred to express the ways of God, he chooses imagery that in his day is ordinary, language that even implies corruption and dishonor.

Instead of using images of grandeur and of cosmic breadth, he uses images of apparent insignificance: the bigness of smallness.

We are left to contemplate the mystery and reversals of God's reign:

- The ordinary illuminates the spectacular.
- The mundane expresses the sacred.
- The unclean becomes the clean.
- The morally defective becomes the standard of morality.
- Dishonor communicates the honorable.
- The powerless effect grand things.
- The ignored outsider betters the preferred insider.

To use abstract language, the reign of God is like a minuscule amount of dishonorable corruption that cannot help but pervade all things for positive ends.

In parabolic imagery, the kingdom of God is like leaven a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until it was all leavened.

Gordon Zerbe teaches New Testament at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg.

News

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Inside the news

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CPT hopes to place team in Chechnya

Chicago (CPT)—An exploratory team to Chechnya sponsored by Christian Peacemaker Teams has found an urgent need for peacemakers in the region. But financing and staff for the project have yet to materialize.

A preliminary team went to Chechnya Aug. 29-Sept. 4 to explore the possibility of further CPT involvement in the region. That team included Canadian social work professor Otto Driedger, Mennonite Central Committee peace projects coordinator Steve Hochstetler Shirk and CPT director Gene Stoltzfus. They spoke to various Chechen community leaders and representatives of human rights groups.

According to women's groups in Chechnya, an estimated 65,000 Chechens and 15,000 Russian soldiers have died since the attempted pacification of Chechnya began on Dec. 30, 1994. Vast areas of Grozny, the industrial capital of the region, have been reduced to ruins by fighting and bombing. A Russian force approaching 200,000 troops continues its attempt to reconquer the region after three years of de facto independence.

Desertion: The failure of the Russian army, the loss of life, equipment and lack of success in gaining the support of local people is unmatched in modern warfare except perhaps in the Vietnam conflict, says Stoltzfus. He says desertion among soldiers is at crisis levels.

"The disintegration of the Russian empire has left its citizens vulnerable to powerful politicians and generals," says Walter Bergen, MCC Russia. "Russian conscripts as well as Chechens are victims. People are seeking ways to rebuild life and hope."

The initial recommendation is to send a four-person team to Chechnya to document the conflict and specific human rights abuses. They would support, encourage and take part in

Bethel students offer mediation

Mediators on call: *David Wilson, junior, and Julie Hart, assistant professor of sociology and peace studies, discuss the new Conflict Management Services offered at Bethel.*

North Newton, Kan. (BC)—Concerned students at Bethel College here have formed a new peer mediation service.

Bethel Conflict Management Services provides cooperative alternatives for managing conflict. Mediators of the service are students who have taken a Theory and Practice of Conflict Management course, have had additional training and have completed an internship with Julie Hart, assistant professor of sociology and peace studies.

CMS is a student-run program that is available to students at no cost. Participation in the peer mediation program is voluntary and strictly confidential. Referrals may come from students, friends, staff, faculty or resident assistants.

Mediators are available to Bethel students beginning this month.

Three Bluffton (Ohio) College faculty members are teaching this fall at North Central Correctional Institution in Marion, Ohio, as the college begins post-secondary instruction leading to a bachelor's degree for inmates. Linda Suter, the program's on-campus director, is teaching First Year Seminar, an introduction to Bluffton's liberal arts program. Rachel Clemens is teaching a general psychology course. Craig Bowman teaches fundamentals of economics.

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Mennonite Central Committee associates John Paul Lederach and Mark Chupp have written a Spanish-language manual outlining an approach to help groups work out indigenous styles of conflict resolution. Titled "Conflicto y violencia? Busquemos alternativas creativas" (Conflict and Violence? Let's Look for Creative Alternatives), it is published by SEMILLA, an Anabaptist publisher in Guatemala City. "Mediation is only a small part of the method," says Chupp. "Conflict transformation is the main theme." The guide was written for a lay audience that has no prior experience in conflict resolution or mediation. It has been purchased by various groups, including the U.S. Department of Justice for use among Cuban refugees at Guantanamo Bay. It may be purchased for $15 prepaid from Mennonite Conciliation Service, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-3889.

Mennonite Mutual Aid plans to move aggressively into life insurance in early 1996. The direction was approved by MMA's board of directors Sept. 8-9. MMA's expansion plans also include diversification into other denominations (moving from the present four to at least 10) and offering new services, including new grant programs. Leadership hopes to move public perception of MMA from a health insurance provider to provider of a broad range of financial services. MMA is also considering ways to expand services into Canada.

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Mennonite Board of Missions volunteer Matt Sears helped plan a public remembrance after a drive-by shooting killed a man in his Washington neighborhood. Darnell Williams was shot Sept. 11 while sitting on a porch stoop. He had been involved with the drug trade, but had made a turn for the better with a new job. Sears invited other neighborhood residents and members of a Christian Peacemaker Team in Washington to gather publicly to ensure that the shooting would not pass unnoticed. On Sept. 12, over 50 people from the area gathered at the corner where the slaying took place.

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A bus accident Aug. 29 didn't stop Anne Garber Kompaore from spreading the gospel. Kompaore, who serves with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in Burkina Faso, was handing out copies of a newly translated version of 1 John when the bus she was riding swerved to miss a cow and tipped over. No one was seriously hurt. Kompaore thought it was not a coincidence that the accident occurred "at precisely the moment that the people had 1 John in their hands. Satan saw such a seemingly insignificant gesture as a threat to his power." The passengers walked a couple of kilometers back to town. Eventually the people who had been interested in the Scriptures came and sat with Kompaore. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

local nonviolent peacemaking initiatives. The CPT steering committee, which meets in October, must approve the project, and funding and Russian-speaking peace workers must be located.

Burundi makes no sense to peace workers

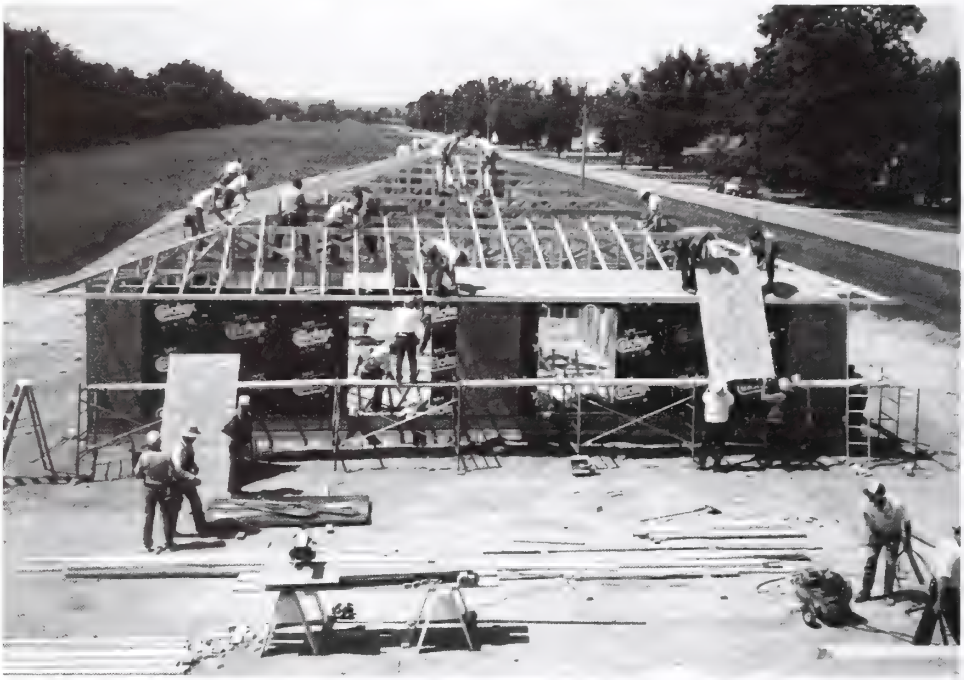
Bujumbura, Burundi (MCC)—Peace presence volunteers here are trying to make sense of a nation where people can eat together one day, kill each other the next.

"We are sitting in an amiable inter-ethnic group, drinking warm Coke and eating goat kebabs, near the spot where a woman killed a soldier a month ago, down the road from the checkpoint where some 100 people were shot and tossed into a mass grave in February and March, next to a priest-nurse who is opening a business that stands a good chance of being burned down soon.

"On the other side of the porch a Tutsi is chatting with his Hutu friends who live in Zaire and only come to Burundi on weekends and who help arm Hutu militias that will likely return in a few months to kill him (the Tutsi).

"And if you think this description is confusing, try living here," says Mennonite Central Committee worker Peter Dula, attempting to explain the situation in Burundi where sporadic violence threatens to turn into civil war like the one that has devastated Rwanda, Burundi's northern neighbor. A complex mix of motives—political and ethnic as well as greedy and

MDS puts up home in Kansas



Rick Fast (MDS)

A new house goes up: *MDS volunteers on the job in Elwood*

Elwood, Kan. (MCC)—Mennonite Disaster Service workers put up a four-plex apartment building here the third week of August.

The town of 1,000, located on the Missouri River about 40 miles north of Kansas City, lost about 170 housing units to flooding in July 1993. MDS contributed months of cleanup that year. Then, two years later, the community approached MDS to ask about the possibility of a building blitz.

"Some people on the board thought this isn't the kind of work MDS is for," recalls Virgil Regehr of Inman, Kan., who serves as the unit's volunteer coordinator. "We're set up to clean up after disasters. In the end, though, the board agreed that this is another way of serving."

With 40 people working each day, it only took three days to erect the framework and roof of the 2,400 square-foot building. Its four apartments will be rented to elderly townsfolk who lost their homes in the floods.

vindictive—fuels the conflict.

Dula and six other MCC "peace presence volunteers" are involved in the often ambiguous task of helping to restore relationships and trust, particularly between Hutus and Tutsis.

"Sometimes we scratch our heads and blink like owls in the daylight at ironies so bitter they simultaneously invite and defy rage, humor, despair, sarcasm and even tears because they are too strange to understand and too awful not to try," says Dula.

Yet some groups and individuals are working hard to "make Burundian society a better place for their children and grandchildren," says Lauren Yoder, MCC Burundi co-representative. And the MCC volunteers are finding ways to support their efforts.

Last month MCC helped sponsor "Let's Rebuild Our Region," a four-day youth conference in Bujumbura, the capital. The prime minister of Burundi gave the opening speech, proclaiming the conference, "a positive step toward reconciliation."

More than 1,000 people registered, including both Hutu and Tutsi as well as a few from the Twa ethnic group that comprises about 1 percent of the population.

A conference highlight was seeing the audience respond to 10 Hutus and 10 Tutsis who, on stage, requested and received forgiveness and understanding from one another, reports Suzy Yoder, MCC Burundi co-representative. These surrogate confessors recalled the cycle of violence that has killed thousands of people and destroyed much property over the years. People in the audience, moved by what they were seeing, turned to their neighbors and began asking for and receiving forgiveness as well.

MCC volunteer Keith Miller organized the Kibimba Peace Theater, a drama group representing all three ethnic groups. Their short play showed ethnic differences being acknowledged and overcome.

Activists challenge church on violence

Richmond, Ind. (NCP)—Some 45 peacemakers discussed the social roots of violence at a consultation during the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. The group looked beyond traditional Anabaptist concerns with warfare to identify "a pervasive social system based on domination."

It also identified a list of 10 challenges for the church:

- honing biblical interpretation, especially distinguishing "descriptive" (what is) from "prescriptive" (what should be) passages,
- discerning unique ministries God calls individuals and churches to,
- communicating in ways that unite people,
- expressing witness with joy,
- practicing nonviolence to ourselves—self-care,
- strengthening witness through prayer, study and discernment, forgiveness and evangelism through social witness,
- listening with gentleness and expressing hope,
- discarding cultural biases in biblical interpretation,
- understanding the relationship between violence in homes and streets and military violence,
- continuing dialogue.

The conference was sponsored by New Call to Peacemaking, a joint initiative of Mennonites, Friends and Church of the Brethren.

COMMENTARY—CHINA

Chinese women take long view of development

Dennette Alwine attended the international women's conferences held in Beijing, China, Sept. 4-15. She has taught in China for five years under China Educational Exchange.

Beijing (CEE)—It is not surprising that the thousands of Chinese women who attended the recent Forum on Women were not likely to be found amid controversial discussions or protest marches. For them, the site at Huairou was not a United Nations free-speech zone but simply a part of China.

Why? Because a 10-day conference is but a moment compared to a lifetime in China. Coming from a civilization with a 5,000-year history, these women are prone to take a long view. They work within the system.

For some Chinese presenters this did mean giving lip-service to Chinese

Continued on next page

Mennonite Economic Development Associates will address the theme of "Just Rewards: Who Benefits From Your Business?" at its annual convention Nov. 2-5 in King of Prussia, Pa. Accounting executive Preston Hofer and social justice advocate Ronald Sider will examine how business success impacts lifestyle and spiritual outreach. For information call 1-800-665-7026.

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Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College has established an exchange program with the University of Cantho, Vietnam. Tran Than Thi Thui and Bui Anh Kiet, mathematics professors at the university, are studying English language at Fresno. The program is a joint effort with Mennonite Central Committee, which placed teachers at Cantho University from 1990 to 1993 and has continuing involvement with its medical and agriculture departments.

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Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship will host its third biennial Mennonite Arts Weekend Feb. 2-4, 1996. The theme will be "The Body in Art and Spirituality." Featured guests include filmmaker/critic Dirk Eitzen, sculptor Katherine Bartel, storyteller Esther Wiens and poets Raylene Hinz-Penner and David Waltner-Toews. Contact Bob Wells at (513) 281-0793. The Fellowship plans to publish a second edition of *Living Mirror*, a collection of Mennonite youths' writing. Students ages 8 to 18 may send poems and short short fiction by Oct. 20 for consideration. Nonreturnable submissions of one page are preferred. Include name, age, home address and phone number on the back. Each writer is limited to five entries. Send to Suzanne Marie Hitt, 3981 Woodridge Blvd., Apt. 10, Fairfield, OH 45014-7570; (513) 860-3853.

Mennonite Central Committee is exploring programming in the Gaza Strip. Sonia Weaver and Alain Epp Weaver (above) and their son Samuel have moved to the Gaza Strip as MCC's first workers there. They recently completed three years as English teachers in Zababdeh, West Bank. They extended their term one year to pursue the Gaza assignment.

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Affordable credit is a step closer for small-scale entrepreneurs in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, thanks to Mennonite Economic Development Associates. MEDA has registered a new credit facility there and hopes to issue loans by fall. The agency hopes to loan $25,000 in its first year. Four-year goals include 3,000 active clients, 60 percent of whom will be women, and an annual loan volume of $1.8 million (U.S.).

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Workers at Pantex nuclear weapons facility, Amarillo, Texas, have come forth with allegations concerning health, safety and environmental issues at their workplace. Some allegations include improperly stored nuclear waste, loose wiring in radiation alarm monitors, mislabeled explosive parts and requests to stamp inspection steps that were not performed. Some employees have alleged retaliation against them for raising concerns. (*The Nuclear Examiner*)

women's progress. However, the 28-member Chinese Christian women's delegation spoke frankly about social problems in China, and about what they are doing to solve them. They lived out the motto of the YWCA of China, "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:32).

A panel discussion, "Women, Christianity, Society," sponsored by Chinese Christian women's groups, found women from many countries in attendance. The Chinese panel members pointed to illiteracy, job loss, lack of health care and discrimination as some of the most serious problems facing Chinese women today. These problems arise from both recent economic changes and from deeply rooted cultural attitudes.

In spite of large-scale efforts to wipe out illiteracy, 100 million women above the age of 15 are still illiterate. When families face financial difficulties or hold traditional views on women's roles, it is girls who are most likely to leave school. The YWCA is attempting to organize basic literacy classes, Bible reading classes, literacy and vocational training for farmers (60 percent of whom are women), and drop-out prevention programs. After severe floods in 1991, their efforts even include rebuilding a primary school.

Jobless: Another issue stemming from illiteracy is job loss. As development brings increased mechanization and the dissolution of government-run enterprises, many people are being laid off. Because their skills and education are often lower then men, women take the hardest hits. The YWCA is behind retraining efforts in places like Shanghai, where textile workers are being displaced.

Government decentralization has meant less money for health care. During the past decade, the employers' responsibility for health care has shifted to the household. Health care often becomes unaffordable. And with a shortage of doctors, health care is often inaccessible as well. The Amity Foundation, a Christian-initiated social service agency, has provided training courses for rural doctors (50 percent of trainees are women), sponsored drinking-water projects to prevent illnesses, and organized the "Grandma Project" to supply orphanages with trained and loving caregivers.

Discrimination can also be found in the church in China. Among China's 8 million Christians, about 70 percent are women. In seminaries, female teachers and students now account for 50 percent of the total. But among ordained pastors, women make up only 17 percent of the total.

"The duties of female pastors are technically equal to male pastors," said one woman, "but because of people's traditional ideas about women, this is not a reality. Some female pastors are still denied the right to serve Communion or conduct weddings and funerals. But the rights of women as pastors are given by God, and sometimes women must fight for full participation as pastors."

Solidarity: Comments like this drew applause. One Latin American participant expressed solidarity: "What you've said today could have been said exactly about church women in my country."

As a listener, I was left with the impression that Christian women have been working steadily within the fabric of Chinese society with little praise. This session was a marvelous time for them to stand up and be counted. It was also an opportunity for those of us from outside China to learn what perseverance for the Kingdom means.

"It was the leadership of Christian women in their homes during the dark years [of the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976] that allowed Christianity to continue in China," said Jean Woo, former National Council of Churches coordinator for China programs. Now that commitment continues as women respond to the needs of a changing China, with the long view that is typical of Chinese nature. As a 70-year-old seminary leader from Wuhan said with solemn victory in her voice, "We had nothing when we started, but we know that in the end God will provide everything we need."

Canadian from Japan pastors in Russia

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Before returning to his church in Japan, Bill Derksen opted for a stop off in Russia. In August and September he filled in as an interim pastor at a Protestant church in Moscow.

Derksen's interest in the two-month assignment was spurred by his friendship with Masha Sternik, a fellow student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., during the 1994-1995 academic year.

Following their seminary graduation, Sternik invited Derksen to become acquainted with her family and home community in Russia. This led to his decision to spend two months in Moscow.

"Pastoring an international, interracial, interdenominational church is a lesson in ecclesiology and missiology," he said. "I have been warmly welcomed by this believing community. It feels as if I'm surrounded by the kingdom of God."

Derksen grew up in Japan as the son of missionary parents. He later attended college and seminary in North America and served as an associate pastor at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C. In 1983 he returned to Japan as a mission worker with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"As I look out across the 200 or so people gathered in the auditorium of the German school where we meet, I realize what a unique position I am in—a Canadian missionary from Japan pastoring a church in Moscow with many African participants," he said.

"I can't preach as though issues like poverty are 'over there,' nor do I need to challenge the congregation to be more racially diverse," he added. "What I do need to say is that we are all equally members of the church community in terms of responsibility and privilege. No one should be more demanding on account of economic or social status, race or denominational affiliation."

When Derksen returns to his assignment with the Oita Mennonite Church in Japan, he will take back, among many things, a renewed appreciation for congregational outreach. He noted how the assistant pastor, who is from Sudan, manages a soup kitchen that feeds 1,000 people daily at three locations in Moscow.

"I am amazed at how the congregation mobilizes its resources to respond to the needs of its members and the surrounding society," he said. "The church is actively participating in the momentous changes that are taking place at this juncture in Russian history. I have the privilege of being a witness to their faith in action." *Carla Reimer*

COMMENTARY—BOSNIA

NATO bombings wrong strategy

Hansulrich Gerber is Mennonite Central Committee's Europe secretary.

Tramelan, Switzerland (MCC)—I am alarmed by what NATO is doing in the former Yugoslavia, and by Western misunderstanding of the situation. Both are more likely to threaten world peace than to end this war.

After more than two weeks of NATO bombing of Serbian targets in Bosnia, here are some reasons why we must speak against NATO's action:

1. It has killed an unknown number of innocent people.
2. It increases the sense among people of Serbian background that the world is against them and wants to hurt them. Peace is not built upon such feelings.
3. It has reinforced the media's inclination to ignore the whole picture and/or downplay the refugee tragedies created by Croatian military "liberation" of the Croatian territories Krajina and Western Slavonia.
4. It leads Slavic and Orthodox people to feel like enemies of the West, including the United States, which has supplied most of the air weaponry.
5. It promotes Russian nationalism, which is also a threat to the West.
6. It has not brought the region closer to peace. It pretends the key to peace is military defeat of the Serbs rather than healing, recovery and the cessation of ethnic cleansing. It is a tragic irony that the NATO actions have led to the Bosnian and Croatian militaries retaking territories and thus creating a new wave of refugees.

NATO's forceful intervention, whatever its material effects are, will make it more difficult to work on peace, because it has continued the violence. Any violence becomes reason for more violence.

It is time to publicly acknowledge that what the military interventions in the Persian Gulf, in Somalia and in the Balkans leave behind are dead bodies, destruction and messes for many years. That's a far cry from peace and construction. What is it that the Western nations really want for their poor neighbors? Can Christians agree we want healing and recovery?

Several Mennonites took LSD in the mid-1950s while serving with Mennonite Central Committee. The voluntary service workers were part of a control group in a study by the National Institutes of Health to test possible treatments for schizophrenia. (*Mennonot*)

• • •

Mennonite Central Committee is seeking North Americans working in mental health and related fields, as well as survivors of trauma, to participate in learning tours between February and April 1996. Each of the two- to three-week tours will take participants to areas of the world where people have recently suffered trauma and dislocation. Participants must be committed to learning about approaches of their colleagues in vastly different cultures, to serve as resource people at an MCC-sponsored consultation in North America in June 1996, and must cover their own expenses. Tours are planned to Russia, Africa and Central America. Contact Bob Herr at MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151.

• • •

Rebecca and Paul Pereverzoff, Mennonite Central Committee Jordan representatives, report stories of extensive hunger in Iraq. Iraqis, once fairly well off, suffer because of international sanctions imposed before the 1991 Persian Gulf War and from their government's harsh rule. Two recent MCC food shipments will help ease some hunger in Iraq. Some 90 metric tons of milk powder, shipped in conjunction with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, arrived in Iraq earlier this summer. In mid-July MCC finally received U.S. government permission—after an unexplained eight-month delay—to ship two containers filled with 38,400 cans of MCC beef to Iraq. The meat, valued at $134,400 U.S./$184,100 Cdn., was to arrive in Iraq by September. MCC also hopes to ship 13,000 school kits to Iraq, the same number MCC shipped there two years ago.

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

New Hopedale Mennonite Church, Meno, Okla., celebrated its 100th anniversary July 15-16.

* * *

St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church will hold its 50th anniversary celebrations Oct. 20-22. Contact Betty Penner at (905) 934-4391. (*CMC Nexus*)

* * *

Warden Wood Community Center, Scarborough, Ont., will celebrate its 25th anniversary Oct. 14-15. For information, call (416) 694-1138.

* * *

Several Manitoba churches have recently celebrated 50th anniversaries, including Carman Mennonite Church, Aug. 19-20; Niverville Mennonite Church, Oct. 7-8; and Glenlea Mennonite Church, Oct. 1. (*CMC Nexus*)

* * *

Mennonite Central Committee has issued a statement on Bosnia, "Are We Sliding Into a Bigger Bosnia War?" The statement calls for maintaining an arms embargo against all parties. It calls for "patience, wisdom and maturity. [The conflict] needs the prayers of peace-loving Christians who question the naive, aggressive energy of those who support this most recent wave of NATO bombing."

* * *

Bill Ryerson of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, is turning swords into plowshares—and a profit. Ryerson's Wild Bird Marketplace sells "Flora and Fauna" products, which turn war materials to a better purpose. The product line uses salvaged brass and aluminum from bullet and shell casings, ship propellers and other war materials to make garden signs, sundials, decorative doorbells and plant wall brackets. (*MennoExpressions*)

MINISTERS

Randy Berg has resigned as youth pastor at Zoar Church, Langham, Sask.

Ruth Boehm is associate pastor for care giving and Christian education at Bethel Church, Winnipeg.

Rob Brown was installed as youth/associate pastor at Eden Church, Chilliwack, B.C., June 25.

Glen Klassen was installed as pastor at Lowe Farm (Man.) Bergthaler Church Aug. 20.

Marvin Koop is pastor at Emmanuel Church, Winkler, Man.

Kevin Miller is youth pastor at Neuanlage Grace Church, Hague, Sask.

Peter Neudorf has resigned as pastor at United Mennonite Church, Black Creek, B.C.

John Neufeld served as summer pastoral intern at Peace Church, Richmond, B.C.

Karen and **Keith Pankratz** are associate staff for children and music and youth/college and career, respectively, for Pleasant Hill Church, Saskatoon.

Walter Thielmann has resigned as pastor at Clearbrook (B.C.) Church. He and his wife Annie will be going to Germany to work with Aussiedler with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Ruth Isaac Wiederkehr has resigned as associate pastor at First Church, Saskatoon.

WORKERS

Cora Askren, Houston Church, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Akron, Pa., where she will work as an international administrative secretary for Self-Help Crafts of the World.

Brenda Bellamy, Seattle Church, is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Gocklingen, Germany, as a housekeeper and farmhand.

Thomas Allen Buller, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Haunsfeld, Germany, as a farmhand on a hog farm.

Malinda E. Combs, First Church, San Francisco, began a two-year MCC term in May in Ephrata, Pa., as customer service and sales supervisor at Self-Help Crafts of the World Store.

Susan Driedger, Listowel (Ont.) Church., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Kirchheimbolanden, Germany, as a shopkeeper and baker.

Karen Ediger, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., is part-time marketing and sales assistant for Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan.

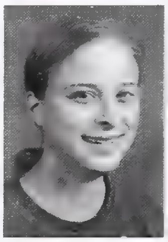
David Falla, Encuentro De Renovacion Mennonite Church, Miami, began a one-year MCC term in January in Miami as a service intern at a church.

Alwin Dietrich Friesen, Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Signau, Switzerland, as a farmhand

Galin R. Funk, Trinity Church, Hillsboro, Kan., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands, in a local greenhouse.

Ruth Goertzen, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., is part-time secretary for Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kan.

Justina Heese, Steinbach (Man.) Church, began Sept. 1 as associate executive

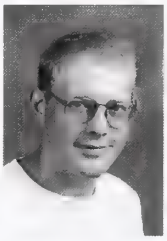


Bellamy

Buller

Driedger

Friesen

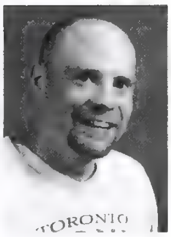


Funk

Janzen

C. Nester-Detweiler

D. Nester-Detweiler

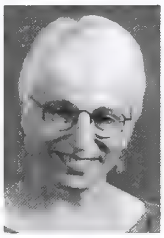

B. Pankratz

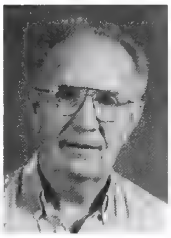
J. Shires

P. Shires

Tschetter

H. Warkentin


M. Warkentin


J. Wiebe

M. Wiebe

Yaeger

Yoder

secretary of the Resources Commission of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. **Tym Elias**, current executive secretary, will continue half-time. He tendered his resignation in spring, but agreed to continue half-time until a full-time replacement is found.

Vincent Janzen, Herold Church, Cordell, Okla., is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Vielbach, Germany, as a farmhand.

Doug R. Klassen is young adult director for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

Cheryl and **Dan Nester-Detweiler**, Assembly Church, Goshen, Ind., are beginning two-year MCC terms in Akron, Pa. Cheryl will work as a data entry secretary until January and then in customer service and as a secretary with Self-Help Crafts of the World. Dan will serve as a computer services manager with Self-Help.

Bruce Pankratz, Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Zambia teaching at a secondary school.

Peter Rempel, Commission on Overseas Mission secretary for personnel and Europe, and liaison for Africa, will also begin as part-time executive secretary of the Council of International Ministries, beginning in January 1996.

Julie Janzen Shires and **Paul Shires**, Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan., are beginning four-year MCC terms in Indonesia as assistant program directors.

Valerie A. Schrag, Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio, is beginning a one-year MCC term in Lancaster, Pa., as a peace history researcher and writer.

Matthew G. Tschetter, Hutterthal Church, Freeman, S.D., is beginning a two-year MCC term in Akron, Pa., as a maintenance assistant.

Herb and **Micki Warkentin**, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, are beginning two-year MCC terms in Hindman, Ky. Herb will work as an adult educator with Hindman Settlement School and Micki as a craft co-op manager.

Cynthia Susan Lee Wideman, Hawkesville (Ont.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Niederhorbach, Germany, where she will work as a nanny.

Jake and **Mary Wiebe**, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, are beginning two-year MCC terms in Winnipeg as custodians.

Rebecca L. Yaeger, Carlock (Ill.) Church, is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands, in a greenhouse.

Ed Yoder, Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, is beginning a one-year MCC Intermenno term in Hannover, Germany, as a kitchen worker at the Bildungsstatte Kirchroder Turm, a Protestant convention center.

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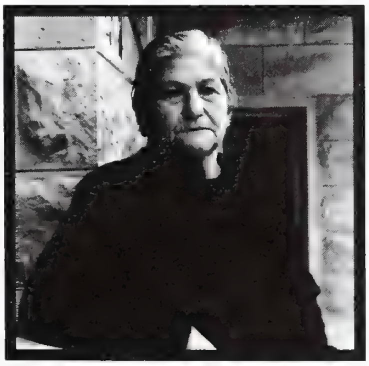
1-800-757-5101



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Bluffton College seeks a **director of multicultural affairs** to develop and implement programs to meet the special personal, social and cultural needs of minority and international students. Half-time appointment to the teaching faculty in the area of the candidate's expertise is expected; master's degree (Ph.D. preferred). Screening begins Oct. 16 and will continue until the position is filled.

Send letter of application and resume to **Donald L. Schweingruber, Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196; (419) 358-3247**. Bluffton College is an equal opportunity employer.

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The International Guest House, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, is seeking an **assistant host or hostess** to fill an immediate opening for a one-year voluntary service assignment. Responsibilities include the usual tasks for operating a bed and breakfast facility, but with the added dimension of relating to international guests in a Christian homelike setting. Cross-cultural experience desirable.

Contact **Annabelle Kratz, Board Chair, 13495 Brighton Dam Road, Clarksville, MD 21029; (301) 596-9057**.

Bethany Theological Seminary is seeking applications for a full-time tenure-track faculty appointment in **New Testament**, beginning Aug. 1, 1996. The person appointed will teach graduate courses in New Testament in the joint curriculum Bethany offers with Earlham School of Religion, participate in continuing education programs of the Bethany Academy for Ministry Training, and carry other faculty responsibilities. Qualifications: (1) Ph.D. or Ph.D. candidacy, (2) demonstrated teaching effectiveness, (3) member of the Church of the Brethren (or related Anabaptist denomination) and committed to its teachings and values, (4) approach to teaching congruent with the Seminary's mission, including education in partnership with congregations, (5) ability to work effectively in an ecumenical and cross-cultural learning environment and with the various constituencies of the Seminary. Deadline for application **Nov. 15**.

Prospective candidates should submit a letter of application and curriculum vitae, and request three references to send letters of recommendation. Direct materials to **Search Committee, c/o Academic Dean, Bethany Theological Seminary, 615 National Road West, Richmond, IN 47374-4019**.

The Mennonite church of Trenton, Ohio, requests application for a full-time **pastor**. We are a small congregation and a General Conference member.

Please send credentials to **Pastoral Search Committee, Trenton Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 19, Trenton, OH 45067; (515) 539-7021**.

Foothills Mennonite Church is seeking a full-time **pastoral leader**. We are a dynamic, urban church with an active membership of over 200. The role of the pastor includes the following:

- to provide a caring, compassionate and conciliatory ministry
- to provide spiritual direction to the congregation
- to participate in a teaching and preaching ministry
- to engage in an equipping ministry, affirming and encouraging the gifts and abilities of individual members and groups
- to work with worship committees in planning meaningful, integrated worship experiences
- to demonstrate a strong Anabaptist faith.

Inquiries and resumes should be sent to **Pastoral Search Committee, Foothills Mennonite Church, 2115 Urbana Road N.W., Calgary, AB T2N 4B9**. Screening of applications will begin Nov. 15 and will continue until the position is filled.

Goshen College seeks faculty for a full-time position as **laboratory kindergarten teacher and director of early childhood education program** beginning July 1, 1996. Preferred qualifications include doctorate in early childhood education, teaching experience in college teacher education programs and experience in working with children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Responsibilities include teaching in half-day laboratory kindergarten and a course in early childhood education each semester and supervising kindergarten and early childhood student teachers. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Men and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and three letters of recommendation to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526**. Applications will be received until the position is filled. If you have further questions, call John Nyce at **(219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660**.

Eastern Mennonite University has the following position openings:

- **Faculty position in theology, ethics and philosophy**. Full time, beginning fall 1996; Ph.D. preferred. Teaching experience at the college level an advantage. Must have commitment to an Anabaptist/Mennonite understanding of the church. Application deadline: **Dec. 15**.
- **Program director** responsible to implement and administer a new, innovative adult education program, including a degree-completion program in Lancaster, Pa. Master's degree in education or business required, doctorate preferred. Experience in management and administration essential. Experience in adult education highly desirable. Appointment date: January 1996 (at the earliest). Application deadline: **Oct. 30**.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Send letter of application and resume to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**. EMU reserves the right to fill these positions before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant.

Jonas Bontrager careens through his Amish teenage years in ***Runaway Buggy***, a new novel just released by authors Carol Duerksen and Maynard Knepp. Guaranteed to grab your interest and hook your emotions with its inside look at Amish life, this book features 15 detailed, authentic illustrations by Susan Bartel. Paperback, 144 pages, $13 U.S. includes shipping.

Order from **WillowSpring Downs, Rt. 2 Box 31, Hillsboro, KS 67063; (316) 367-8432; fax (316) 367-8218**.

Goshen College announces a faculty opening in **acute-care nursing**. Doctoral preparation preferred. Master's degree in nursing required. Goshen College is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply send a resume and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526**. Applications will be received until position is filled. Men and minorities are encouraged to apply.

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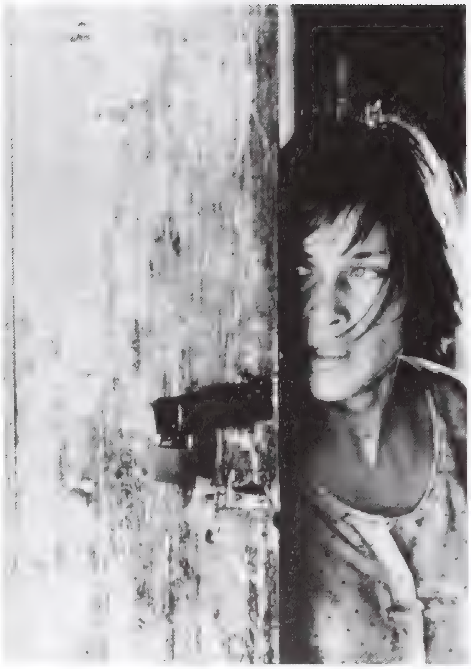
Reviews

FILMS

ACCIDENTAL BURMIST

Beyond Rangoon, *written by Alex Lasker and Bill Rubenstein, produced by Barry Spikings, Eric Pleskow and John Boorman, directed by John Boorman*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor



Bill Rubenstein

Escaping tragedy: *Patricia Arquette as Laura Bowman in* Beyond Rangoon

In the opening scene of this powerful film, a listless Laura Bowman (Patricia Arquette) flashes back in her mind to the tragedy she wants to escape, her discovery of her murdered husband and son. *Beyond Rangoon* uses her coming to terms with her loss as a personal focus while also exploring the political turmoil of Burma in August 1988.

Arquette plays a doctor who cannot stomach blood or injury. On a tour in Burma with her sister (Frances McDormand), she loses her passport one night when she follows a crowd of nonviolent demonstrators and watches 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi walk through a group of soldiers, effectively disarming them. Arquette must stay behind to get a new passport, while her sister and the tour group leave for Thailand.

She meets a local tour guide (U Aung Ko) and asks him to take her to the countryside, even though it is dangerous. She doesn't care. What does she have to live for anyway? She meets other dissidents and learns about the terrible injustices occurring in Burma. Soon she is caught up in the turmoil and has to escape for her life while also caring for her elderly tour guide. The country's destruction provides the context for her own healing.

Boorman is masterful in his pacing, and his dramatic scenes are more realistic—and therefore surprising—than many filmmaker's more contrived, last-second escapes. He depicts violence graphically but not gratuitously, and he shows the effective use of nonviolent persuasion, a rarity in films today.

The major flaw of *Beyond Rangoon* is that it becomes too didactic. While it focuses on the travails of the doctor and her guide, the film wants audiences to know about the brutal military regime in Burma and the heroic though largely unknown efforts of Aung San Suu Kyi. But people *should* know what's happening there.

BOOKS

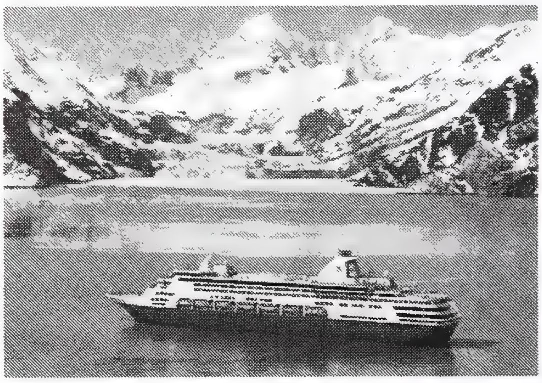
FAITH AND MENTAL HEALTH

No Longer Alone: Mental Health and the Church *by John Toews with Eleanor Loewen (Herald Press, 1995, 174 pages)*

Reviewed by Martha Friesen Graber, North Newton, Kan.

Psychiatrist John Toews and educator Eleanor Loewen have developed a resource to help Christian communities and individuals grow in their understanding of mental health issues as part of total well-being. In a discussion guide commissioned by the Mental Health and Disabilities program of Mennonite Central Committee Canada, they explore the interrelationships of mental, physical and social aspects of our lives. Many stories and anecdotes illustrate the effects of mental illness on ourselves and our loved ones. Toews calls on the faith community to assist in the move toward wholeness and mental health and to help represent the healing power of Christ among us—a previously neglected topic.

In his own experiences and in his work with clients, Toews concludes that Christian faith can be a great force for mental health with the spiritual realm permeating all other aspects of life. In conducting workshops on



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mental health and Christianity for church groups, he developed the content for this series of studies.

In simple, straightforward language he explains a variety of concerns and types of mental problems at various life stages with sensitivity and candor. Since relationships are essential for mental and spiritual wholeness, the format of the book is primarily designed for small-group discussion to explore our own vulnerability and humanness. However, it is also adaptable to individual study for personal growth.

The book should be studied with Bible in hand. Each of the 10 chapters begins with a Scripture reference that is not quoted but must be read to understand the context for the story, focus and search sections. Eleanor Loewen's questions for further study are stimulating and thought-provoking. The extensive listing of other resources encourages further exploration and growth.

The book can help release the healing power of the church as it learns to understand mental health problems and how to respond to them as a caring community.

ECOLOGY FROM THE BOTTOM

Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm *by Leonardo Boff, translated by John Cumming (Orbis Books, 1995, 185 pages)*

Reviewed by Perry Yoder, Elkhart, Ind.

Leonardo Boff is a well-known South American Catholic theologian whose views have been controversial at times. In this book he turns his sights on a trendy topic, ecology.

Some may think that ecology is a concern that can be afforded best by the affluent, who have the time and energy to worry about such things. The poor are too busy trying to stay alive. Indeed, this is the first issue he addresses: Is it true that ecology is a luxury for the rich in the Northern Hemisphere? At first glance the answer seems to be yes, since this is where most pollution originates. But, he argues, we should not let the prosperous Northerners define ecology so narrowly in terms of their own interests. Rather we must begin with the notion that ecological action ought to alleviate "the fate of the most threatened persons and creatures."

The work resulting from this point of view is an ecology from the bottom, from the standpoint of our "social trash." From here it is the cause, not the consequences, that must be addressed—the affluent have not set limits to their own desires. He cites the thesis of C.S. Lewis, that human power over nature is actually power by some over others using nature as a means. In short, "Social injustice leads to ecological injustice, and vice versa."

The remainder of the book, a collection of essays, in a loose way revolves around this theme, the relationship of ecology to social justice. For Boff, ecological justice involves social justice. In both cases, humans have not accepted their role in God's creation but have gotten out of place and have destroyed what they have not created.

The answer for Boff is a new appreciation of solidarity—our solidarity with each other, in fact our dependence on each other, as well as our solidarity with and dependence on nature. Only when we step down from our pedestal of egoism and selfishness will we be in any position to fulfill our God-intended role toward each other and nature.

Because of the perspective of the writer, as well as his learning and passion, this is an important book for Christian people who are concerned with social justice and ecology.

Resources

- **227 Ideas From the General Conference Mennonite Church**, a new resource catalog, lists over 200 items to borrow or buy for use in the church or home. Each General Conference church received a catalog in August. Additional copies are available from the GCMC Communications Office, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100, ext. 235.
- **Neighbors Near and Far: Mennonites of European Descent** is a children's mission curriculum featuring culture, languages and games from Switzerland, Russia, Paraguay, the United States and Canada. To order contact the Commission on Education, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100; $20 U.S./$26.50 Cdn. In Canada contact Marg Franz, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4; (204) 888-6781.
- **Beyond the News: TV Violence and You** and **Beyond the News: TV Violence and Your Child** videos are now available, giving commentary and techniques for counteracting the TV. To order call Mennonite Media Ministries at 1-800-999-3534.
- **Mennonite World Conference videos** are now available in Spanish and Hindi. **Ekklesia—Witnessing to Christ in Today's World** is available in Spanish and Hindi. **Ekklesia—Peacemaking: Healing and Hope** is available in Spanish. To order either of these call Mennonite Media Ministries at 1-800-999-3534.
- **Celebrate Children: Hope for Our Future** is the theme of the 1996 desk calendar offered by Mennonite Board of Missions Media Ministries, and ready for imprinting with your congregation's name. For a sample or more information, call Mennonite Media Ministries at 1-800-999-3534.
- **Where Is Jesus?** asks a full-cover oversized postcard that is available for use in congregational outreach at Christmas. The back of the card can be imprinted with information about your church's Christmas events. For more information, call Mennonite Media Ministries at 1-800-999-3534.
- **Development: Seeking Abundant Life for All** is a four-page study/action guide looking at how churches confront injustices that lead to poverty and powerlessness. Order from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; $.30 U.S. each or 4/$1.
- **Faith and Belief: Five Major World Religions** (21-minute video) provides an overview of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. For junior and senior high school age. Available from MCC Akron, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151.
- **Islam: The Faith and the People** (20-minute video) looks at Islam's history, art and architecture, beliefs and the differences between the Shi'ite and Suni groups. For junior high to adult. Available from MCC Akron, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151.

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Editorial

A proposal to integrate Mennonite colleges

Integrating Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church colleges is a sticking point for integration of the denominations. Here's an idea to grease the gears.

Mennonite Church colleges are owned and operated by the denomination. The Mennonite Board of Education owns the properties of Goshen (Ind.) College, Hesston (Kan.) College and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. It controls the endowments. It hires the presidents.

While General Conference-affiliated schools in Canada are owned by various church institutions (see page 8), the U.S. colleges, Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and Bluffton (Ohio) College, are independent of the church.

The Mennonite Church has used the Mennonite Board of Education to hold its colleges accountable. The board has directed its schools with policies it believes will preserve the colleges' Mennonite character. If integration happens, Mennonite Church members worry that the schools' accountability to the church will be lost.

The General Conference colleges have set their own courses. While both Bethel and Bluffton value their Mennonite affiliation, the schools also value their independence. They are confident of their ability to govern themselves in a way that will benefit the church. If integration happens, General Conference members fear the schools will lose the independence they have exercised well for so many years.

College envy: There are those in both the General Conference and the Mennonite Church that look wistfully across this great divide. There are professors of Mennonite Church colleges who envy the freedom of their General Conference peers. There are faculty of General Conference schools who worry that the ties between church and college are too tenuous, too undefined.

Here is a proposal for a middle ground: accreditation. Colleges are well aquainted with accreditation. In order to maintain their standing among other schools, all colleges undergo voluntary examination from accrediting agencies that assess the school's quality. A new Mennonite denomination could establish an accreditation counsel that would regularly review church-affiliated schools to assess the integrity of their claim to be a Mennonite college.

Accreditation would serve as a middle ground for the Mennonite Church and the General Conference. General Conference colleges would sacrifice a degree of freedom by submitting to review. They would gain a more direct tie to the church and more guidance in what it means to be a Mennonite college. The Mennonite Church would sacrifice some control of its schools by giving up direct ownership. Its schools would gain a freedom to set their own directions without losing accountability to the church.

New burden: The task of accreditation would place a burden on the church unfamiliar to the General Conference. It would require the new church to spell out what characteristics make a college Mennonite.

One way to gauge a college's Mennonite character is to count heads—the number of Mennonite church members in its faculty and student body. This criteria has the advantage of being easily computed. It has the disadvantage of judging "Mennonite" in the most facile of ways, saying nothing about the education or experience of a school.

The harder route is to define and measure how life at a Mennonite college will differ from life at a non-Mennonite one. Establishing such criteria would require the church to reassess both why its colleges exist and what it means to be Mennonite.

In a 1990 *Christianity Today* article, Marlin Miller overviewed what Mennonites believe. His first point was that Mennonites stress living the faith, giving more weight to practice than to doctrine. Would a Mennonite college then emphasize practical ways for students and faculty to express their faith? An accreditation group could measure the quantity and quality of experiential learning programs that integrate service with learning.

Miller noted that Mennonites value Scripture over creed or tradition. An accreditation group could measure the effectiveness with which Scripture is integrated into campus life. In religion departments, it could ask how balance is achieved between the direct study of Scripture and the study of theology—people writing about Scripture.

Miller also emphasized the church as community. An accreditation group could assess the sense of campus community identity. Do students feel a part of a community? Does the school provide functions that facilitate community-building? Can a non-Mennonite graduate without understanding, at least in part, what it means to be Mennonite?

Assessing the quality of Mennonite education can be done. The work of developing accreditation criteria will in itself build stronger ties between church and school. It will result in a more clearly focused vision for Mennonite education. *Larry Penner*

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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Addiction: a family problem

- Not my son (see page 3)
- For parents: signs of problem use of alcohol or other drugs (see page 6)
- Gateway drugs (see page 7)

Prologue

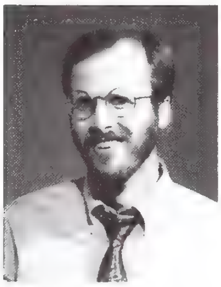
Why focus on addiction in a Mennonite magazine? Are that many Mennonites affected by it?

While I have no statistics on the incidence of addiction among Mennonites, *The Mennonite Mosaic* by J. Howard Kauffman and Leo Driedger (Herald Press, 1991) shows how Mennonites increasingly reflect trends in the larger society. And from my own observations and talking with parents, I know of Mennonite families having to struggle with this issue. It may be more widespread among us than we care to admit.

The story on page 3 may not be typical, but it raises to our attention the difficulty of dealing with addiction and how it affects family dynamics. Sarah Rhodes (a pseudonym) also points out the need for support from family, friends and church members.

We also offer statistics about tobacco, alcohol and other drug use (page 5) and signs parents may look for of problem use (page 6).

Frank Soto Albrecht (page 8) writes about the sin of treating people as disposable. J.B. Miller expresses his hope that a merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church happens quickly (page 10).



Read Jacob Elias' Bible study (page 11) and the profile of Nigerian Athanasius Dapul (page 12), who teaches sign language to other Nigerians.

If you look at the cover you'll notice we are in our 110th consecutive year of publishing *The Mennonite*, which began in October 1885. *gh*

Next issue: The place of work in our lives

Cover: Print is courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago.

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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When one person is addicted to any drug, his or her problems spill over and affect all members of a family.

Not my Son

Sarah Rhodes

Ours is a middle-class, churchgoing family with three children. I thought my children were safe from drugs because I taught them the right things, provided their necessities and saw they were involved in activities. Yet it happened to my youngest, who was in accelerated classes and active in sports.

I removed his jeans from the washer one day. There lay a strange-looking clip, which I later learned held marijuana cigarettes. Suddenly everything I expected for him was in jeopardy.

With red curly hair and millions of freckles, Brad's (not his real name) smiling face could have been on any cereal box as a typical American kid. Our two daughters had already graduated with honors from college. I expected Brad to follow.

When he was 16, I removed his jeans from the washer one day. There lay a strange-looking clip, which I later learned held marijuana cigarettes. Suddenly everything I expected for him was in jeopardy.

I was surprised yet not surprised. I had noticed that his smiling face and happy demeanor had been replaced with mood changes and depression. A new set of friends was coming to see him. He refused to study in the evenings, and I smelled a strange odor when I picked him up after school. I wanted to believe it was simply adolescent behavior that would go away.

But the drug abuse did not go away. Brad's doctor recommended family counseling. I now know the psychologist was not educated about drugs. Brad went with me for counseling but did not cooperate with the counselor. My husband refused to go to the counselor. "I don't need anyone to tell me how to live my life," he said. "Brad would never do a thing like drugs."

Sea of anxiety: One of our daughters attended counseling one time; the other one lived in another city and said she did not have time to attend. I felt alone, drowning in a sea of anxiety.

That summer Brad moved in with a friend and the friend's mother and dropped out of school. "I just want to be a rock guitarist," he said.

A friend gave me literature about a treatment center for young people. The center was 300 miles from home, but my husband and I went to visit the director.

"If he were my child, this is where I would bring him. The program works," said the director as he pounded a table.

Because Brad was not yet 17, the county judge agreed to write an order

Not my son

If you have not had the experience of addiction, you may have difficulty understanding that a family with an addicted member needs friendship and encouragement.

saying Brad would either go to a treatment center or return to school. To have my son brought into court by a police officer and be released to the juvenile home until the treatment center could accept him was painful and degrading to all the family, but we thought we were doing what was right and that change would come.

Three days after Brad went to the treatment center, the director called and said, "Come and get him. He has not caused trouble; he just will not cooperate with the program." Brad came home, re-enrolled in school, and though signs of marijuana use continued, he graduated.

On advice of his probation officer, we began sessions with another psychologist. Again the psychologist tried to help, and perhaps in some ways he did. My husband attended this time, and our marital relationship improved. On the psychologist's advice, I considered my other children's needs.

Meanwhile a drug abuse program came to our city, and a parents' support group was organized. On opening night a young man who came from a halfway house to listen to the director stood and made a wise statement, one I still remember.

"Parents, do not keep your mind on your addicted child all the time because you will neglect your sober children."

He said this happened in his family, and he and his sisters began to act out to get attention. Now he was serving a jail sentence.

I realized I did not allow myself to feel the happiness I deserved when one daughter got married and the other had her baby. I tried to make up for lost time, but that was impossible.

I learned at the parents' support group meetings that we did not cause the addiction, we could not cure it and we could not control it. Others told me Brad's destiny was in his hands because God gives us free will. A 100-pound weight lifted from my shoulders. I felt a unity with the other families. I was no longer alone.

Brad has since gone twice to treatment centers. Each time after finishing the programs, he refused to continue with support groups and was soon living with his former friends. If asked, he always says he can stay sober on his own. The signs of marijuana use are still there.

Low-rent districts: We are told not to enable, which is when a loved one tries to protect the addict or keep the addict from suffering the consequences of his or her actions. But that is difficult for parents. Brad has worked at low-paying jobs and is now unemployed. It hurts to see him live in low-rent districts. When we eat a good meal, I often wonder if he has food. Last week he told us he was approved for a student loan to attend a vocational school to study computer and bookkeeping. He asked if we would help with his living expenses. Is this enabling? Will he make it this time?

If you have not had the experience of addiction, you may have difficulty understanding that a family with an addicted member needs friendship and encouragement. Some feel the family needs punishment "because it

A family disease

Pioneer parents confronted scarlet fever, smallpox and tuberculosis. Today's parents are pioneers, too, as we face a scourge never before experienced in history. Drugs are big money, and our children and grandchildren are the marketplace.

What kind of kids get addicted to drugs? Some think only the poor and uneducated. In attending parent support groups over the past years, I learned that kids from rich families, poor families, single-parent families, two-parent families, religious families, nonreligious families, families where the mother works and families where the mother stays home use drugs. I never met a parent who did not care.

We hear reports that alcohol is one of the most used and addictive drugs, yet it is acceptable. The World Health Organization recognized alcoholism as a disease in 1951, and the American Medical Association did so in 1956. When one person is addicted to any drug, that person's problems spill over and affect all members of a family. Denial, shame, guilt, blame and loneliness take over and the family is dysfunctional. Hence, addiction is a family disease. *Sarah Rhodes* is the family's fault."

We heard comments such as, "If you had taken good care of your kid, he wouldn't be in the shape he is in." One person said we were too religious. Another said we were not religious. We learned that discussing chemical dependency problems with someone who has never been involved is not helpful.

Addiction for a family member is a death in many ways. Family get-togethers are rare. Without truth and trust, a relationship is impossible. My daughters face former friends who ask about their brother. They are embarrassed, so they don't come home often. Unless an addict changes, there is the possibility of death, prison or mental illness. We live with this fear, one day at a time.

Yet there is hope. Addiction is a disease from which a person cannot be cured but can be recovering. When people desire sobriety more than alcohol or drugs, if they follow the treatment program, and with the help of God, there can be sobriety.

I grieve for what might have been and ask, "Why, God?" Nowhere in the Bible are we told to stop praying. Our family prays, waits and wonders.

What happens when prayers are not answered, when things get worse instead of better? Prayers sustain us. They give us peace, hope and strength. I believe prayers are never wasted. I believe prayers are answered in unexpected ways. We live one day at a time, knowing Brad is the one who must choose his destiny.

Sarah Rhodes (a pseudonym) lives in Waco, Texas.

Some facts about tobacco, alcohol and other drugs

In the United States:

- 41,000 babies are born each year with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or Fetal Alcohol Effects because of a mother's drinking habits while pregnant.
- 75.4 million Americans (37 percent) age 12 and older have used illegal drugs at least once in their lifetime.
- 23.7 million Americans have used cocaine.
- 9.7 million Americans currently use marijuana.
- 68 percent of adult drug users are employed.
- Rates of drug-using employees vs. nondrug-using employees on:
  medical costs—3 times higher
  absenteeism—2 times higher
  accidents—5 times higher
- 4.5 million young people age 12 to 17 have tried an illegal drug at least some time in their life.
- 88 percent of high school seniors have used alcohol.
- 83 percent of students report that they could get marijuana easily (cocaine—51 percent, LSD—40 percent).
- 94 percent of college students have used alcohol in their lifetime.
- 85 percent of sexual assaults on college campuses are alcohol-related.
- Rate of deaths due to alcohol-related auto accidents—one every 22 minutes.
- 15.4 percent of young adults age 18 to 25 use illegal drugs.
- 4.5 million women of child-bearing age use illegal drugs.
- Estimated cost of low productivity suffered by businesses attributed to drugs—$71 billion.

Source: American Council for Drug Education. For a reprint of their statistics, contact the Council at 1-800-488-DRUG.

In Canada:

- 74.4 percent of Canadians age 15 or older use alcohol, with a higher incidence among men (80.6 percent) than women (68.4 percent).
- Of those ages 15 to 17, 82.2 percent use or have used alcohol.
- Use of alcohol among Canadians increases in accordance with income; 63.1 percent in the lowest income category, 87.8 percent in the highest.
- 81.1 percent of those with a university diploma use alcohol, compared with only 62 percent of those with less than a secondary education.
- The percentage of Canadians age 15 or older who smoke has decreased, from 49.5 percent in 1965 to 31 percent in 1994. There is little difference between men (32 percent) and women (30 percent).
- Of Canadians age 15 or older, 4.2 percent use marijuana, 0.3 percent use cocaine, and 0.3 percent use speed, LSD or heroin. Males use these drugs at least twice as much as females.

Source: *1995 Canadian Profile: Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs*, published by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse and the Addiction Research Foundation of Ontario

For Parents:

Signs of problem use of alcohol or other drugs

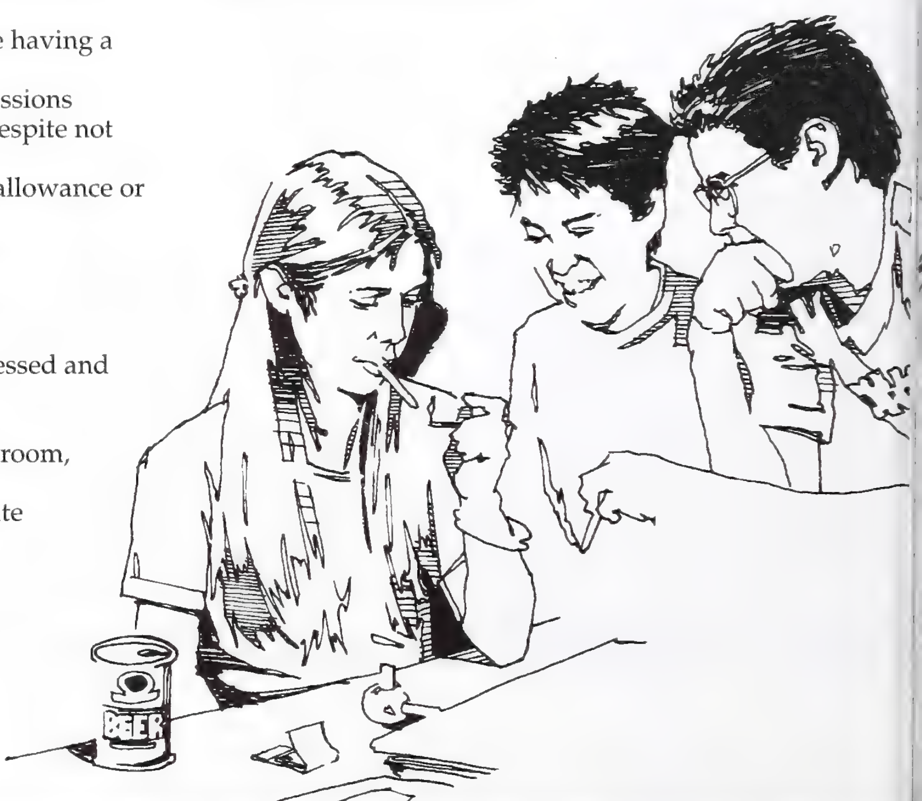
Decline in school performance:
- an atypical decline in grades during the past year
- a rapid, recent decline in grades
- failure to inform parents of school events, including suspensions or requests for parents to meet with teachers
- loss of interest in school activities, including dropping out of athletics, clubs or other extracurricular activities
- contacts from the school regarding truancy, tardiness, dropping classes, vandalism, fighting, thefts or other unacceptable conduct

Problems with law enforcement:
- arrests for driving while intoxicated
- arrests for drinking/drug use at parties or in public places
- arrests for possession, delivery or sale of alcohol or other drugs
- curfew violations
- other illegal acts that only occur when he or she is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs

Problems with finances:
- involved in thefts
- family members begin missing money or valuables from the home
- frequent borrowing of money from family members or friends
- quitting a job and/or job loss due to unsatisfactory job performance
- inability to save money or to pay bills despite having a job or allowance
- sale of clothes, records, stereos or other possessions
- appears to have sufficient spending money despite not having a job
- appears to have more spending money than allowance or job would provide
- is often seen exchanging money with friends

Personality changes, emotional problems:
- frequent, extreme highs and lows
- general change in mood toward a more depressed and negative or critical outlook
- withdrawal from family members
- is more secretive, stays physically isolated in room, withdraws into music
- increasing dishonesty, frequent lying, elaborate stories or excuses
- is increasingly defensive when asked about personal problems, when confronted with irresponsibility
- avoids communication with family members, spends a lot of time alone
- is increasingly angry, defiant
- is verbally and/or physically abusive
- exhibits general loss of energy, initiative, motivation, interest or enthusiasm; is increasingly apathetic
- daily routine becomes inverted: frequently stays out late and sleeps late in the morning
- general psychological impairment: inability to reason, memory loss, inability to think logically, feelings of paranoia

Physical problems:
- appears run-down; has frequent colds, flu or other illnesses due to decreased immunity
- loss of normal appetite
- decline in personal hygiene; bathes infrequently, doesn't change clothes
- drastic weight gain or loss
- complexion appears unhealthy: is sometimes pale or flushed, has bloodshot eyes, face looks puffy
- has frequent injuries or bruises that may or may not have a satisfactory explanation (e.g., "I just fell down.")
- has self-inflicted tattoos, cigarette burns, scars
- suffers from insomnia or other sleep disturbances; or chronic fatigue, tiredness
- chronic dry cough
- changes in menstrual cycle



Alcohol/drug-specific indicators:

- adolescent vehemently asserts his or her right to drink or to get high
- smell of alcohol on the breath, or of marijuana on clothing
- bloodshot eyes, dilated or constricted pupils
- blackouts: inability to remember events that occur while out or while intoxicated
- presence of drug paraphernalia: roach clips, "bongs," cellophane bags, drug-related posters, cocaine spoons, cigarette papers, pipes, bottles
- discovery of unidentified pills or powders; discovery of alcohol, drugs or paraphernalia among your child's personal effects
- smell of incense in room or on clothing (to hide odor of marijuana)
- clothing with drug-related themes; drug-related drawings on books, clothing or body
- returning home intoxicated; staggering, slurred speech, incoherence
- talks freely about getting high and uses a vocabulary typical among regular drug users
- family liquor supply dwindles, disappears or gets watered-down
- medications begin disappearing from family medicine cabinet

Disruption of family relationships:

- increasing irresponsibility in the family, fails to do chores or carry out normal tasks
- defies family rules without regard to consequences
- avoids or decreases participation in family social gatherings and rituals, such as holiday gatherings, vacations, meals, church activities
- increasingly feels like a stranger to the rest of the family
- behavior incites or aggravates increasing tension between parents
- is verbally or physically abusive to parents or siblings
- family members become more fearful of the adolescent
- stays out late or does not return home at all despite increasingly stringent consequences
- blames problems on parents and/or other family members
- avoids contact with family members, goes immediately to room when returning home, is secretive about friends, phone calls, activities or whereabouts
- family members become increasingly preoccupied with the adolescent as the center of their anger, apprehension and suspicion, or of their care and concern

Source: Mirror, Inc., 130 E. Fifth, Newton, KS 67114

Gateway drugs: the need for prevention

In light of a recent study, it seems there is now even greater cause for concern regarding drug use among youth. The steep increase in marijuana use among America's children and teenagers, as reported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, warrants immediate action by everyone—from parents to the president. If these trends continue, the leap in marijuana use among the nation's children (ages 12 to 18) from 1992 to 1994 indicates that 820,000 more of these children will try cocaine in their lifetime. Of that number, approximately 58,000 will become regular cocaine users and addicts.

The Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) released the results of a comprehensive national analysis on the link between the use of "gateway drugs"—tobacco, alcohol and marijuana—and the subsequent use of cocaine and other drugs. The year-long study of data from more than 32,000 households revealed that:

- Forty-three percent of individuals who use marijuana before age 18 go on to use cocaine.
- Young people between the ages of 12 and 17 who use marijuana are 85 times more likely to use cocaine than non-marijuana users.

"This study reveals a consistent and powerful connection between the use of cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana and the subsequent use of cocaine and other illicit drugs," reports CASA president Joseph A. Califano Jr. "An increasing number of American children and teens believe there is little risk in chugging a beer or smoking a tobacco or marijuana cigarette. With the recently reported rise in smoking, drinking and marijuana use by children and teenagers, this report is a wake-up call for parents to discourage their children from smoking and drinking and for governors and mayors to enforce the laws prohibiting the sale of cigarettes, beer, wine coolers and other alcoholic beverages to minors."

The CASA study also concludes that the earlier and more frequently a child starts using these gateway substances, the more prone the child becomes to using hard drugs. For instance, a child who smokes daily is 13 times more likely to use heroin than a child who smokes less often.

"Ultimately, prevention is our only hope for stemming the tide of new addicts," says Califano. "If we can keep our children and teens from smoking, drinking and using marijuana, then we can go a long way toward preventing the use of all dangerous drugs."

Reprinted from the National Family Partnership News, *March 1995*

Letters

SAME MISSION

In a letter to the editor I suggested that "Mennonite Church of Christ" would be an appropriate name for our combined [Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite] churches. Recently someone mentioned that the abbreviations for Mennonite Church of Christ and Mennonite Central Committee would confuse us because they would be the same. If we use MCofC for the church and MCC for the committee, there would be no confusion, and both would show us that they belong to each other. After all, our mission should be the same, to feed and tend the sheep and lambs with love as our Lord told Peter when he said the church is his church. *Geraldine Harder, North Newton, Kan.*

ARTICLE SPAWNS T-SHIRT LOGO

In June, nine youth and three adults from Salem Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio, spent a week in Santa Rosa de Copan, Honduras, on a mission/service trip. You may be interested to know that the idea for the logo on our T-shirts (see photo below) grew from an article in the April 25 issue of *The Mennonite* ("Seven Ways to Capture the Mission Imagination of Youth").

The best part of our effort is that several churches in Santa Rosa are continuing the painting project at the hospital using the paint and supplies that we were able to leave behind. *Maxine Hershberger, Dalton, Ohio*

Speaking out

God's children are not disposable

Jesus calls us to stand up for justice and to love those different from us.

Frank Soto Albrecht

One day Bogota reeled from the news that two drunken police officers boarded a bus and started shooting. They killed one man and injured 10 others. Then they noticed a 13-year-old boy selling candy. Putting a gun to his head, they shot him and pushed him out the door onto the street. They didn't know him but didn't like what he did, so they killed him, got him out of the way.

What's another life?

The owners of businesses in downtown Bogota are concerned about the space around their stores. They don't like society's fringe people hanging around. "Desechables" ("disposables") hurt their business, so they hire vigilante death squads, often consisting of off-duty police officers, to kill off these children of God who wander the streets. They call it street cleansing. These people don't make the newspapers with their deaths. They are quietly buried or cremated, with no one attending their burial. Within four blocks of one of our Mennonite churches, eight youth known as small-time drug dealers were found dead within a two-week period. Prostitutes, homosexuals, the homeless and drug addicts are all on the list of "to be done away with."

Colombia is not the only society in the world that devalues such people, however.

Wayne was a high school student of mine who did all the work required of him and more. He took the textbook home and read it in one night. In many ways Wayne was the ideal student, but he had a side that haunted me. He had little tolerance for others different from himself. In his papers he mentioned that he wanted to kill all homosexuals. Later he said that all teenage mothers deserved to die. He said that anyone who had an abortion deserved the death penalty.

My experience with Wayne took place in Lancaster, Pa. I found many students with philosophies similar to Wayne's. Labeling people "desechable" is a worldwide phenomenon.

Ingrained patterns: Jesus started a revolution, and every time I see his followers celebrating differences instead of destroying them, I rejoice. We disciples of Jesus Christ must break the patterns that society has ingrained in us. That every person is an investment by God and has something to offer is fundamental to the teachings of the gospel.

Each contact Jesus had with others began on the same level. Regardless of their status or actions he loved them all. But treating each person with dignity and respect did not mean he didn't confront wrongdoing. He was ever ready to admonish the actions of the people who were inflicting pain on themselves or others.

One Saturday our youth group from church here in Colombia spent time with people 50 to 70 years older than they. Many of these elderly people never get visitors. For some of them, like Maria, life is difficult. Maria is hard of hearing and unable to speak. She sits in her chair, gazing into the distance. But if you stand in front of her, she will look into your eyes.

As we paired off for a time of personal sharing, youth with an elderly person, Juanita immediately said she wanted to talk with Maria. She talked and laughed with Maria, giving her the attention and value she deserves. As we left that day, Maria gave us the biggest smile of all. A toothless grin, eyes dancing, head nodding, the expressions said it all. Juanita had found the intrinsic good within this person, one many others write off as noncommunicable. She was living out the call of Christ to recognize all people as sons and daughters of God.

The examples of people who demonstrate God's love to all, regardless of their physical state or their actions, are a light this world needs. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to direct us so our paths cross those who are ostracized by our society. Jesus related to cheating tax collectors, prostitutes, Samaritans, Gentiles, Pharisees, traitors, rich egotistical individuals, the demon-possessed, murderers, people down on themselves, abusers, adulterers, liars and more.

We are called to be co-missioners with Christ in changing a societal pattern of classifying the intrinsic worth of individuals. Do we stay away from those whose lifestyles are different from our own? Or do we embrace them regardless of their views and action? Do we try to know the alcoholic next door, or do we avoid him? Have we ever stopped to talk to the prostitute on the corner, or do we only talk behind her back? Do we know the names of the homeless people who walk by our homes? Why they are without shelter?

What does it mean to be co-builders with Christ in his kingdom here on earth? Does it mean separation from the pain and violence of this world? Or does it mean a daily attempt to put ourselves in situations where we meet people different from us?

Frank Soto Albrecht (COM)

Disposable? *A Colombian boy*

Radical Jesus: In standing up for what we believe is justice, in relating to all people on an equal level, we may put ourselves in difficult situations. Most people resist being uncomfortable and value their lives above all. Could you say that until a person is ready to dedicate one's life to following a radical Jesus, separation rather than integration will be the pattern?

May we allow ourselves to be open to radical reformation. May the Holy Spirit move us Christians to model the Jesus way of relating to others, which includes rather than excludes. Speaking and acting against overt violence is obvious. Working at recognizing and appreciating the intrinsic value of every individual, regardless of their status or actions, is more difficult but just as essential. As dedicated followers of Jesus Christ, we must not tolerate any humans being labeled "desechable."

If all of us who are Christians would see through God's eyes and love with God's heart, a revolution would take over the entire world.

Frank Soto Albrecht taught in the Lancaster (Pa.) city public school system for 10 years prior to moving to Bogota, Colombia, where he and Elizabeth, his wife, are serving a three-year term under the Commission on Overseas Mission.

The premature death of Carlos Arturo

Scott Brubaker Zehr

Death.
The fruit of violence.
The offspring of evil.

Death.
The cord of discord,
A sadly thick strand in the web of Colombian culture,
has tightened its grip with the loss of Carlos Arturo.

Murdered by unknown bandits in the town of Choconta.
Father of two.
Husband and provider.

He suffered a horrid act of violence.
And nobody knows,
Why or how or exactly when,
they hacked away his life with machetes
in the town of Choconta.

Oh God what a fright,
that this happens in our midst,
to our brother.
They brought his body,
maimed and violated
to be set before his children,
and strangers, my God, who wanted to look!
Curious drunkards from the street with a fetish for darkness.

Pastoral stutters of comfort?
in that musty parlor of death?
With mother weeping,
Sister wailing?

Groping.

Awkward silence, choking pain
Lightened,
with the arrival of the Lord of hosts.
Lifted,
with the entry of the Lord
in the people of the faith.
In the members of our struggling church
from the poor neighborhood on the south side
of the sprawling Bogota.

They arrived like princes on steeds of grace,
to the aid of the trembling pastor,
who welcomed them with relief.
The Lord has come.
We will be all right.

Scott Brubaker Zehr and Mary, his wife, served as pastors of the Mennonite Church of Diana Turbay in Bogota, Colombia, from 1991 to 1994.

Fiscal health

Let's get on with the merger

A wish list for integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church

J.B. Miller

I grew up in the South in a Mennonite community where I had little contact with General Conference Mennonites. It wasn't until I was in college that I even knew there was a group called General Conference Mennonites. Sounds pretty provincial, doesn't it? I didn't have a lot of exposure to General Conference Mennonites until I became associated with Mennonite Mutual Aid.

As I've spent more and more time with MCs and GCs, I find little difference between them. Differences that may exist seem accentuated by some people who seem bent on protecting their turf, or by people who whine about polity, whatever that is. The fact remains, to the outside observer there are many more similarities than there are differences.

Differences that do exist among both groups are more apparent along urban and rural lines than they are along denominational lines. MC churches in the city are more like GC churches in the city than MC churches in the country.

When the two denominations voted during Wichita '95 to move toward merger, I celebrated, even though I was told not to. I celebrated because the merger signifies the reunification of a church that was split years ago for reasons I have no idea of, nor do I care to know. Isn't this kind of reunification worth celebrating?

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Merger will have its challenges. I have a wish list of what I hope will happen prior to, during and after merger. Some of these are financial; others are hopes that deal with relationships and cooperation.

1. I look forward to the day when we no longer talk about GCs and MCs as though there is a pecking order.

2. I dream of a denomination that is organized to be more attuned to the person in the pew. Businesses call this "being market sensitive." Isn't it the people in the pew who pay most of the freight for the denomination's existence? Shouldn't we be working at ways to listen more effectively to their hopes and dreams for the church?

> ***I hope for merger sooner rather than later. Both denominations run the risk of drift and inaction if merger is not pursued quickly. The delegates have voted to merge, let's get on with it.***

3. I hope for a more efficient church with less organizational structure. Rather than two church offices, one in Newton, Kan., and one in Elkhart, Ind., a centralized office makes more sense.

4. I long for the end of duplication: two periodicals, several mission boards, numerous regional conference offices, and many more examples. I hope the merger will thus reduce the amount of funds our church organizations need to run these organizations.

5. I hope for the fair treatment of people whose jobs will be eliminated as a result of merger. If efficiencies are to occur (which they must), jobs will be eliminated. But those whose jobs are eliminated must be treated fairly. We have the opportunity to go beyond what some businesses do and make transitions as smooth as possible.

6. I call for consideration of one general secretary for both denominations now, not when merger takes effect. Both denominations are looking for general secretaries. Why not find a general secretary who is committed to the merger and can lead that process? Otherwise we run the risk of hiring two general secretaries with one or both soon out of a job as merger approaches.

7. I dream of an end to the discussion that one denomination is taking advantage of the other or that one is doing the other a favor by "letting them merge." That type of conversation is destructive, particularly when it occurs at church leadership levels. Church leaders should be spending their time talking about how the church can be more effective, not protecting turf.

8. I hope for merger sooner rather than later. Both denominations run the risk of drift and inaction if merger is not quickly pursued. Too often discussions will end with the phrase, "We'll have to wait until after the merger." The delegates have voted to merge, let's get on with it.

9. I hope that all work begins with the premise that the results of merger are to extend the work of the church. The vote for merger should underscore the belief that we will have a more dynamic church, one that will be more effective at extending Christ's kingdom. Otherwise the merger is a waste.

I celebrate the vote to merge. I know it's great table conversation in church bureaucracy circles, but my hunch is that most people in the pews don't understand what the fuss is all about. If they are concerned about it at all, they are concerned about how their money will be spent. It is a fundamental stewardship issue.

Power and the big picture

Paul describes the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ in 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13.

Jacob W. Elias

In the year A.D. 50 a congregation emerged in Thessalonica, the capital city of the province of Macedonia. This church was planted as a result of the missionary work of the apostle Paul and his companion Silas. It was to this church that Paul wrote what we call 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

Tuning into the world of this first-century congregation, whose excitement and uncertainty elicit these two pastoral letters, I marvel at the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Picture with me a Jewish artisan in his 30s, setting up shop to make tents in ancient Thessalonica. While he works at his trade, Paul shares the gospel with people who come to his shop. This leads to the opportunity to share the good news with the members of their households as well. As a result a congregation emerges.

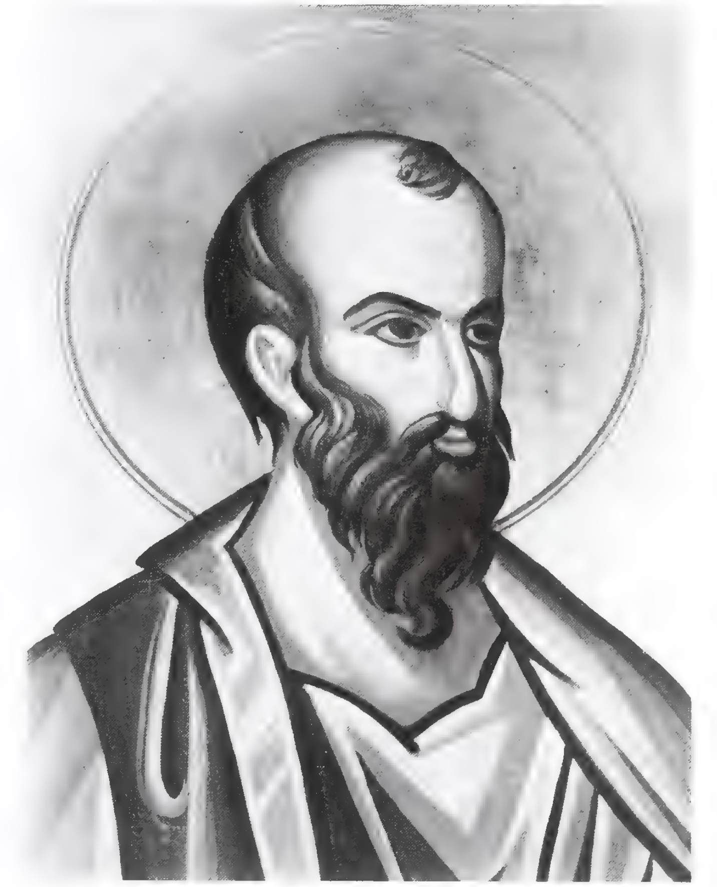
It would have been more comfortable for Paul to stay in Jerusalem with Gamaliel or in Tarsus with his family. After meeting the Risen Christ, Paul chose instead to cross the cultural chasm into Gentile territory.

Recalling how the people of Thessalonica had responded, Paul marveled at the power of the gospel. These converts had received the gospel "not as a human word but as what it really is, God's word, which is at work in you believers" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). God's powerful working within the community helped them remain faithful, even under affliction.

We have lost this sense of the power of the gospel. We are impressed by power under the hood of a car or the power of a fastball, but do we know the gospel as power? Do we know the gospel as transforming power in lives taken captive by drugs? Do we know the gospel as empowerment for witness to the truth? Are we so surrounded by the symbols of economic and political power that we do not know the power of the gospel?

I have a hunch that we miss the power of the gospel because we do not see the big picture. What was it that sustained the Thessalonian converts? Paul had presented the vision of God's kingdom and glory: "We charged you to lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory" (2:12).

God's reign: Here Paul alludes to the fact that the life, death and resurrection of Jesus started something that is still unfolding in the life and mission of the church. This "something" is God's reign. Believers are called to live under God's reign in anticipation of the assured prospect that this reign will yet come in fullness. We join Jesus in praying, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."



Paul marveled at the power of the gospel: *A rendering of the Apostle Paul from an icon at the Greek Orthodox monastery of Chora in Istanbul*

The New Testament passages about the future climax of God's reign are often politely ignored in our circles. We sometimes speak derogatorily about "pie in the sky by and by" Christian hope. First and Second Thessalonians have sometimes been shoved aside as too preoccupied with the "sweet by and by" and not concerned enough about the real life of the present. One result has been that these texts have been taken over by the makers of sensational videos about the rapture and by the writers of glossy paperbacks on the theme of the last days.

> ***Are we so surrounded by the symbols of economic and political power that we do not know the power of the gospel?***

The emphasis on the second coming of Christ, the day of the Lord, the wrath and the judgment of God have an underlying pastoral intent. In these passages Paul seeks to reassure the suffering believers that despite appearances to the contrary, God will ultimately triumph. His concern is to urge these believers to live in light of that assured future victory.

This then is the big picture. As for Jesus, so for Paul, at the heart of the message of the gospel is the vision of God's triumphant reign. Have we lost this vision?

Jacob W. Elias teaches New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. His commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians in the Believers Church Commentary Series has just been published by Herald Press.

Profile

Sign language opens up new worlds

Athanasius Dapul helps deaf children in his native Nigeria.

Pearl Sensenig

In 1982 Athanasius Dapul came to North America as a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) exchange visitor from Nigeria eager to "do some kind of service to humanity." Six months of teaching disabled North Americans to count, exercising their stiff limbs and performing other duties at the Association for the Disabled of Elkhart (Ind.) County proved an "eye-opener" for Athanasius.

Upon returning to Nigeria he rejected a technical school scholarship and enrolled in special education courses at the university, specializing in education for the deaf because it seemed "most challenging."

Some Nigerians become deaf due to diseases such as measles, typhoid and meningitis. In recent years, however, the Nigerian government has launched an extensive immunization program to combat these debilitating diseases.

Today Athanasius, using American Sign Language, teaches some of the 350 students, ages 4 to 20, at Plateau School for the Deaf, the state's only school for deaf children. Using hand-drawn diagrams, he demonstrates how to twist fingers into signs. His nimble fingers spell out words, patiently repeat them, then repeat them again in his efforts to open up new worlds of communication to his students. He is supported by MCC.

In the past, Nigerian families often secluded disabled children, afraid the community would shun them, believing the disability was connected with evil spirits. Over the past 15 years, however, many Nigerians have come to value education, including education for disabled children. Unfortunately, this more open attitude comes at a time of increased economic hardship for Nigerians. Now parents are more likely not to send their children to school because they cannot scrape together tuition money.

Although financially supported by the government, Plateau School for the Deaf experiences shortages of even the most basic supplies, such as chalk. The school library shelves are nearly bare, a special hardship for deaf students who learn concepts through concrete materials, like pictures and the written word.

Lack of electricity is another obstacle. Because deaf students have to see one another to converse, darkness means all communication must cease by 7 p.m., when night falls.

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

Hard work and faith in God: *Nigerian teacher and former exchange visitor Athanasius Dapul signs a message.*

Despite these difficulties, students find the school a sanctuary; some are even reluctant to go home during holidays. With sign language they are able to communicate their feelings, a new experience for most. Many deaf students feel misunderstood and lonely outside the school, where they have formed close friendships with other deaf students.

In the school dining room, Athanasius noticed senior students always serve food to primary students first. When he inquired about this, he was told the students themselves devised this distribution method. "When food is short the older students sacrifice for the younger ones," he says. The students are housed together; each older student is assigned to care for a younger student.

A committed Christian, Athanasius has also become a spiritual adviser to the students. Some deaf students struggle with guilt, feeling they have "caused their mothers to suffer," says Athanasius. Nigerian men may take a second wife or desert their wives after the birth of a disabled child. "Thank God this is changing," he says.

Nearly all the students are anxious about their futures. They have seen few role models of professional deaf people and they know they will face discrimination when they look for jobs. They also worry about whom they will marry. Some young women who receive marriage offers from hearing men wonder how they will be able to communicate.

Knowing the students will face many hardships because they are deaf, Athanasius stresses hard work and faith in God so that "wherever you find yourself you will find joy." He models these traits. When the school needed latrines, he not only instructed the students how to build them but also amazed the students by joining them to dig in the mud.

In the future, Athanasius hopes parents of deaf children will be willing to study sign language so they can talk with their children. He also hopes Plateau School for the Deaf can form ties with a technical school so that students can learn trades and have more secure futures.

Pearl Sensenig works for Mennonite Central Committee Communications.

CPT doubts value of Middle East peace accords

Newton, Kan.—Christian Peacemaker Teams staff bring a cold realism to hopes for peace raised by September's Middle East peace accords.

Workers in the United States and in the West Bank question the value of accords signed Sept. 28 between Palestinian Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. CPT staffer Gene Stoltzfus in Chicago says the "language of apartheid" is being used more and more to describe the emerging reality.

The new reality will take shape over the next six months as the new agreements are implemented. They call for withdrawal of Israeli forces from six West Bank cities, including most of Hebron, where CPT has had a peacemaker team stationed since June.

That team also voices scepticism about the new accords. Wendy Lehman, CPTer in Hebron, reports that under the agreements Israeli settlers will be permitted to stay in the center of Hebron and will continue to be protected by the Israel Defense Force.

Divided city: Palestinians had hoped for a departure of Israelis. Instead, an Israeli settlement will continue to exist in the heart of

CPTers assaulted

Hebron, West Bank (CPT)—Israeli settlers assaulted Christian Peacemaker Team members Kathleen Kern and Wendy Lehman Oct. 2. The two were treated for minor injuries.

Settlers attacked Palestinians throughout the city Oct. 2. Kern and Lehman were walking toward an Israeli military checkpoint outside Beit Hadassah, where settlers were throwing bottles at Palestinian shopkeepers. Kern was taking photos.

About 20 settler men ran toward Kern, yelling what she calls a "battle cry." One pulled her down and took her camera. Several others spat at her.

Lehman arrived as a settler punched Kern's ear and she fell. Lehman was also pulled to the ground. She was kicked twice, once in the lower back, once at the base of the skull.

CPT

Tense reality: *Israel Defense Force soldiers check Palestinian identification cards daily at the Abraham Mosque in the heart of Hebron. The Palestinians and Israelis in Hebron coexist on the edge of violence.*

Inside the news

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Church changes one woman's life / p. 16

CHM fears budget drop / p. 17

COM looks at integration / p. 17

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., saw a near 10 percent jump in enrollment this year. Students studying at the seminary this fall number 169, up from 155 last fall. Because more students are studying full-time or taking heavier loads, the full-time equivalency is at 106.8, up from 84.7 last year. The increase follows several years of declining enrollment.

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Christian Peacemaker Teams has established a discussion group on the internet called "CPTgamenet" to address video game violence. CPTgamenet is an open forum for parents, educators and game players. Discussion will focus on responsible electronic games, creative alternatives to violent video games, ways to evaluate specific games for violent content and ideas for public witness against video violence. To subscribe send an e-mail message to listserv@cpt.org with the words "info CPTgamenet" and your name in the message body. Or contact Janice Kulp Long, 950 Heather Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060; (540) 953-3111, e-mail: cpt2@igc.apc.org.

The Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale raised $573,873 Sept. 22-23. The event at the Elkhart (Ind.) County fairgrounds drew about 40,000 people. The Shalom House Against Hunger, built in conjunction with the sale, sold for $130,000.

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The "Christian retail industry" in the United States (sales of religious books, T-shirts and giftware) is now worth some $3 billion a year, triple what it was in 1980. (*The Marketplace*)

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Three British Columbia men may lose their hair for Mennonite Central Committee. Waldo Neufeld of MCC B.C., Conference of Mennonites in B.C. youth and young adult ministries director Imbenzi George and Ray Cymbaluk, youth pastor at Mountain Park Community Church, Abbotsford, B.C., have offered to shave their heads if B.C. Mennonite youth raise $100,000 Cdn. by Dec. 1 for an MCC bomb removal project in Laos.

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A Winnipeg surgeon is sending medical supplies to a leprosy hospital in his home country of Paraguay. Dr. Frank Duerksen, an orthopedic surgeon who emigrated from Paraguay in 1969, collected a 4,000-kilogram (9,000-pound) shipment to be sent through Mennonite Central Committee Canada to Paraguay. This is the eighth time Duerksen has sent medical supplies to Paraguay. In mid-September he spent one week working at the leprosy treatment hospital, a joint project begun by Mennonites in Paraguay and MCC in the 1950s. He spends four weeks working in South America three times each year. "I want to serve God through serving people," he says. "That's the reason for living."

Hebron. Hebron will be a divided city; the Palestinians and their police force will live alongside the Israelis and theirs. The accord calls for a new road to be built into the Israeli settlement so that settlers can come and go without passing through the Palestinian part of the city.

Two days after the signing, Hebron faced an upsurge in settler violence, reports Lehman. "Settlers damaged approximately 13 Palestinian cars and five homes. Palestinian residents reported assaults." Lehman and fellow CPTer Kathleen Kern were also assaulted (see box on page 13). They anticipate more violence.

Says Lehman, "Palestinians believe the continuing harassment and physical attacks of settlers will get worse as the settlers feel more secure in their position here." She says settlers in Hebron claim Rabin does not speak for them when he deals with Palestinians. Israeli settler Azrael Moshe Ben Israel told her Sept. 23, "We are at war. We are at war with these people." *Larry Penner*

MEDA helps incubate Russian small business

Moscow (MEDA)—A small-business "incubator" designed to nurture fledgling Russian firms opened near here Sept. 20.

Mennonite Economic Development Associates opened the incubator to provide microbusinesses the kind of support they have been urgently requesting, says Christopher Shore, MEDA's regional director in Moscow. "We have carefully designed our efforts so that the needs of physical space, financial credit and management training are addressed," he says.

The project is funded by MEDA members and a $3.8 million (Cdn.) grant from the Canadian International Development Agency. It is organized within a newly created Russian nonprofit organization called Sozidaniye Foundation for Economic Development. The foundation has a facility in Zelenograd, just outside Moscow, which provides office and production space for local businesses, as well as conference rooms, training rooms and central office services like fax, photocopying, answering services and electronic mail.

The facility also houses MEDA's microcredit and training departments. "Our credit program is aimed at providing equipment to the small-business sector, which continues to have a very difficult time getting access to credit for their businesses," says Shore.

MEDA has been active in Russia since 1990. The agency helped form the Association of Christians in Business in Russia. Together MEDA and the ACB have run training programs aimed at upgrading the management and technical skills of small-business owners and those interested in starting their own business.

Goodbye Swift Current, hello Marpeck

Swift Current, Sask. (SCBI)—Swift Current Bible Institute here will become Marpeck School of Discipleship July 1, 1996. The new school will have a different program, different ownership and a different governing structure from SCBI.

On Sept. 30, delegates from the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta and the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan, owners and operators of SCBI, voted by a 75 percent majority to make the change.

The new program, rather than focusing exclusively on classes and academics, will include several components. It will consist of classes, practical service and work experience, community life and personal growth. All parts of the program will combine to form a final grade that will determine pass/fail.

Students will be evaluated four times a year, based on their progress from individual starting points. This is meant to accommodate students with varied academic, faith and personal backgrounds. The program will also include significant personal mentoring. Its goal will be to produce graduates who will have the skills, knowledge and commitment to incorporate their faith into every area of life.

The new school is named for Pilgram Marpeck, a 16th-century Anabaptist leader. Though still operating unapologetically in an Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition, the school hopes to attract people from the larger Christian church tradition to become partners and to send students. Through active marketing, the school hopes to boost enrollment to 50 within four years. Current SCBI enrollment is 21 students.

Hispanic Menno churches see growth, vitality

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Marco Guete hides his face in his hands and tries to speak. No words come out. His eyes water.

Later he apologizes for being "sentimental." It's just that he can't stop feeling emotional when he talks about the changes in the Hispanic Mennonite church in the last 17 years.

In 1978 there were only two General Conference (GC) Hispanic Mennonite churches—one in Lansdale, Pa., the other in New York City. Today there are 22 in the United States and four in Canada.

"It's a joy for me to see such tremendous growth. I feel blessed," says Guete, director of resource ministries for the GC Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

The vitality, he says, comes in part from the independent Bible study curriculum called the "Instituto Biblico Anabautista" (IBA) that Guete initiated in 1988. IBA's goal is to provide pastors and lay leaders with a theological and practical framework in the areas of Bible knowledge, Christian living, Anabaptism, evangelism and mission.

"The basic approach is that the book is the teacher. There are a lot of questions throughout the material that the students have to respond to," he says, noting that while the course is designed for self-study, each student is required to meet periodically with a teacher for an evaluation.

Over 300 GC and MC Hispanics have participated in the program. Enrollment for this year stands at 89. Students pay a minimal fee for the materials since the program is subsidized by CHM.

The impetus for IBA came out of a meeting in which Guete and five Hispanic Mennonite pastors discussed concerns about the future of the church. "We were worried that other groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses would easily be able to come in and convert our people if we didn't have a strong base of knowledge," he says.

For the next six months Guete worked on developing a curriculum. At first he had to rely on material from other denominations. Today IBA offers a course on Anabaptist theology, written over a five-year period by the Latin America Resource Center, Santafe de Bogota, Colombia. "I am happy that we gradually are using more and more of our own material," he says.

Guete, a native of Colombia, was interested in religion from a young age. At age 11 he was meeting with a Catholic bishop up to three times a week because he wanted to become a priest. His hopes were dashed when the bishop said Guete could not follow his calling because his parents were separated.

Finding Mennonites: Later he began attending a Mennonite church in New York City because his friend was the pastor. He recalls how on one occasion Ernst Harder, then secretary for Hispanic ministries for CHM, visited the congregation to speak about the origins of Mennonite faith.

"At that time, I was not aware of Anabaptist theology. I spent a good portion of the next day talking with Ernst. I discovered Mennonite beliefs were in line with my thinking. I liked the identification with the poor, the suffering," he says.

Further reading led him to pursue studies at Goshen (Ind.) College and the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lombard, Ill.

"Mennonites have a valid theology that is

Violeta Ajquejay

Vital worship: *IBA students worship together at a retreat in Meridian, Miss., in September.*

A review team has recommended terminating Serving And Learning Together programming in Canada. SALT is an 11-month service program for youth ages 17 to 20. The review determined youth are more interested in short-term cross-cultural experiences than in long-term service assignments in Canada. The review found interest in SALT diminishing over the last four years. The number of SALT housing units has fallen from three to one, currently operating in Waterloo, Ont.

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Jonathan Larson, former mission worker to Botswana, is available for speaking engagements through next summer. For information contact Jeannie Zehr, Commission on Overseas Mission, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347; (316) 283-5100.

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The church in Cambodia is growing. After years of persecuting the church, Cambodia legally recognized the Christian community April 10, 1990. At that time as few as 10 small house churches were known. In 1995 there are approximately 300 churches in Cambodia. (*MARC Newsletter*)

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Mennonite Disaster Service was on the scene soon after Hurricane Opal whipped through northwestern Florida. More than 30 workers helped clean-up efforts in Crestview, Fla., on Oct. 7, three days after Opal hit the Florida Panhandle. The Crestview Mennonite Church sustained damage. In Albany, Ga., MDS is still requesting volunteers for assistance rebuilding from 1994 floods. And in St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands, MDS is working to repair damage from hurricane Marilyn, which struck the island in mid-September. People wishing to help can contact the MDS office at (717) 859-3889.

"The Pentagon is reminding members of the military that they are prohibited from active participation in groups that advocate violence," reports the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.* (*National Catholic Reporter*)

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Robert Suter and Robert Ramseyer were honored by Bluffton (Ohio) College Oct. 14. Suter received the BC Service Award and Ramseyer the BC Alumni Distinguished Service Award. Suter has taught high school chemistry and physics and taught at Bluffton from 1969 to 1988. Ramseyer has served 30 years as a missionary to Japan through the Commission on Overseas Mission.

• • •

A Chicago inventor has patented a collection plate with a credit-card slot. The gizmo comes with a privacy screen and a transmitter that beams data to a computer in the church office, which records the amount and passes it on to the credit-card company. (*The Marketplace*)

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Cigarettes kill more than 400,000 U.S. citizens each year, more than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, fires, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined, reports *Messenger*. It says the Coalition on Smoking or Health reports that cigarettes generate billions of dollars in health-care costs. Although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have identified tobacco use as the most preventable cause of death in the United States, and the Environmental Protection Agency categorizes secondhand smoke as a carcinogen, the U.S. Congress is considering spending about $42 million next year for tobacco-related support.

relevant for Hispanics because of the emphasis on values such as simple life, justice and community," says Guete.

Prior to IBA, there was no Spanish curriculum aimed at the lay level, he says. Now more Hispanic Mennonites are able to have a broader understanding of the Anabaptist faith. *Carla Reimer*

Church changes one woman's life

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Maria Eugenia Taborda likes to start her day at 4:30 a.m. She finds that early morning is a perfect time for her to study the Bible.

Three times a week Taborda, a member of Comunidad de Fe Mennonite Church in Chicago, meets pastor Ingrid Schultz at 5 a.m. for a walk in the park so they can discuss any questions Taborda might have about a Scripture passage.

"I want to learn how I can develop a better relationship with God," Taborda says. "I want to use my time in a way that pleases God."

"Her deep love for the Word of God is a challenge to me," Schultz says. "She has the heart of a servant. If someone is sick, she will help clean their house or offer to make a meal. Her zeal keeps me on my toes."

Taborda wasn't always eager to find ways to express her faith. In fact, she remembers making a commitment to follow Christ more out of respect for her grandmother than because she believed in God.

When she and her husband, Mario, left Colombia seven years ago, they hoped to discover a better life. Instead, Taborda found she didn't feel like she belonged in the United States.

"I didn't know English. When I went to the store, everything was different. People were not friendly to foreigners," she says.

Her first job, within two weeks of arriving in America, was as a live-in housekeeper. This meant she only saw Mario once a week.

Then her father died and she was not able to return to Colombia for his funeral. To make matters worse, she had a miscarriage.

These problems, coupled with the fact that her marriage was starting to unravel, led to depression and a longing to return to her native Colombia.

But, as Taborda puts it, God had something else in mind. Through one of her husband's relatives, she learned about Comunidad de Fe.

From the first service she attended in January, Taborda knew the church was a special place because "everyone was so friendly." Her husband started attending about six weeks later, after he received pastoral counseling related to his loss of a job. They both were baptized in June after taking a discipleship course.

Sisters of faith: *Maria Eugenia Taborda (right) with two other members of Comunidad de Fe: Adela Lopez (center) and Blanca Tulia Acosta*

As a result of their involvement at Comunidad de Fe, Maria and Mario have a new commitment to each other as well. "It changed our marriage about 90 percent. We were at the point of getting divorced. Now we feel like we are newlyweds again," Taborda says.

The couple was happy to learn that the church offers a Bible study curriculum that is published in Spanish by the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"The course helped us have more faith in God. We learned that God is not authoritarian. We now know that God has great love for us," Taborda says. *Carla Reimer*

CHM worries about funding

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—At a Sept. 14-16 meeting near Wichita, Kan., Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) members expressed reservations about a new donation policy adopted by the General Conference General Board in March.

Under the new policy, which took effect May 1, undesignated gifts are distributed among conference programs according to percentages set by the General Board. In the past, all undesignated money at year's end went to a "where most needed" category to shore up programs still in need of funds. CHM had relied on where-most-needed funds to make its budget in previous years.

Funds must now be designated "where most needed" if they are to be used for areas of conference work lagging in designated funding. As a result, the disbursement of dollars to the where-most-needed category dropped to $51,979 for this year's June-August receipts, compared with $366,378 for the same period in 1994.

Due to the new policy, CHM may end up with a smaller percentage of its budget this year than in the past, says CHM executive secretary Lois Barrett.

In order to temporarily protect CHM and other programs from the new policy, the General Board agreed in March to provide a funding "safety net" through 1996. At its fall meeting, CHM asked if the General Board could further define the nature of the safety net. The General Board meets in November.

Also at the board meetings, CHM U.S. asked for more clarity in regard to the role of the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council. "MILC was formed about 25 years ago. We felt it was time to initiate a review of MILC and CHM in terms of their relationship with Native churches in the United States," says Barrett.

CHM U.S. members also asked MILC and the Hopi Mennonite Church Council to join them in addressing the relationship of the mission of Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., to the mission of the churches.

In other action, CHM agreed to continue to support the Mennonite Environmental Task Force.

CHM and COM look to cooperate more

North Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) and the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) met together here for part of their fall meetings.

The two program boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church discussed areas of cooperation and ideas for new joint work.

CHM and COM noted that they have cooperated in publishing ventures such as Neighbors Near and Far and the recruitment of mission/service workers.

Among the ideas for future joint work were the following: link overseas churches with North American churches and agencies, form a multicultural team to teach peace in a variety of ethnic areas and organize leadership exchanges.

COM discusses integration

North Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The future integration of the Mennonite Church (MC) and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) topped the agenda of the GC Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) during its meeting here Sept. 15-16.

"We talked about what we feared about integration as well as what we

Where does your food budget go? Pacific News Service reports that of every dollar spent on food in the United States, 10 cents goes to Philip Morris, the nation's number one food processor. Six cents goes to ConAgra, the number two food processor. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

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The total radioactive fallout of nuclear weapons tests may eventually lead to 1.2 million fatal cancers, reports *The Washington Spectator*. Most of the cancer cases, the magazine says, will not surface until the next century because only 15 percent of the cancer-causing dose from atmospheric fallout has descended so far. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

• • •

The plaintiff of Roe v. Wade, the U.S. Supreme Court case that legalized abortion, has joined the pro-life group Operation Rescue. Norma McCorvey, the anonymous "Jane Roe," announced Aug. 10 that she has undergone a religious conversion. McCorvey, 47, quit her job as marketing director for A Choice for Women, a Dallas abortion clinic. She was baptized by the president of Operation Rescue, and is now a volunteer for the organization. McCorvey was 21 years old in 1969 when she began the Roe v. Wade lawsuit challenging restrictions on abortion. Because of the length of the court case, she never had the abortion. Her daughter, now 25 and strongly pro-life, was located in 1989 by an adoption search consultant. While McCorvey still favors legalized abortion in the first trimester and still lives with a lesbian partner, she feels welcomed by the pro-life community. "They accept me as who I am, not what I've done or what I can do for them." (*Christian Week*)

saw as positive. In many ways, cooperative work with the Mennonite Church is already part of our mindset," says COM secretary Glendon Klaassen, noting that COM no longer begins unilateral projects in countries where there are other Mennonite groups.

MC Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) chair John Eby was asked to participate in this meeting to help build a stronger relationship. COM and MBM held a joint seminar for their mission workers this past summer.

Eby reported on the recent restructuring of MBM in response to a study of its constituency needs. MBM now has the following divisions: global ministries, partner services, and mission education and communication.

Unlike MBM, however, COM members thought it would be better to wait to restructure until integration, as a way of "minimizing the stress" that any changes would bring, says Klaassen.

COM also discussed how overseas churches could be included more in its structure. One idea was to have one voting member from each continent represented on COM. While members were in favor of this in principle, they decided against it due to budget and other concerns.

A total of 14 overseas guests traveled to Canadian and U.S. churches and participated in Wichita '95 during July. Their travel was sponsored by COM, MBM, Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Central Committee. Their comments about their experience included calls for renewal, more youth involvement and a vision for mission in North American churches.

COM approved new work in church planting and evangelism in Thailand with Eastern Mennonite Missions. COM also appointed Marco (see page 15) and Sandra Guete, Hesston, Kan., for work in Colombia, and Andrew and Sue Wade, Bellevue, Wash., former mission workers in Taiwan, for work in Hong Kong.

Record

MINISTERS

Rod Wiebe is youth pastor at Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver.

WORKERS

Gisela Friesen, Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, is serving with Mennonite Central Committee Canada's Serving And Learning Together (SALT) program in Waterloo, Ont.

Marlyce F. Gundy has been appointed academic coordinator/recruiter in the continuing studies office at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Matthew Kreider, Point Grey Fellowship, Vancouver, has begun a service term with Mennonite Board of Missions as a computer consultant at Net Prophets, Washington.

Cornelia Penner, Chilliwack, B.C., is serving with Mennonite Central Committee Canada's SALT program in Waterloo, Ont.

Anita Pries, Springfield Heights Church, Winnipeg, is serving with Mennonite Central Committee Canada's SALT program in Waterloo, Ont.

Bluffton College announces a tenure-track position as **assistant/associate professor of computer science** beginning fall 1996 (or possibly spring 1996). Applicants should possess a Ph.D. or M.S. in computer science; those with completed Ph.D. will receive preferential screening but M.S. applicants will also be considered. The computer science major at Bluffton College is situated in the science department, and students follow a curriculum similar to the ACM guidelines for small colleges. Current requirements include strong physical science and mathematical components such as discrete math, calculus, numerical analysis, introductory physics and digital electronics. Applicants should feel comfortable teaching the usual computer science courses (computer programming, data structures, file processing, assembly language, computer architecture, operating systems and programming languages) from both a mathematical and physical perspective. By teaching the courses listed above (some on alternate years) the successful applicant will be teaching most of the courses in the computer science curriculum. Additionally, a liberal arts computer course exists. Review of applications begins Nov. 15 until an appointment is made.

Please submit letter of application and resume or vita to **Amy M. Tabler, Assistant to the V.P. and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.** Equal opportunity employer.

Bluffton College announces a full-time, tenure track faculty position as **assistant/associate professor of accounting** beginning fall 1996. CPA and master's degree required; Ph.D., experience in business accounting and teaching preferred. The position involves teaching undergraduate courses in elements of accounting and intermediate accounting, income-tax accounting, auditing and cost accounting. The successful candidate will also develop and teach a course in advanced accounting. Consideration of applications begins Nov. 15 and continues until an appointment is made.

Send letter of interest and resume or vita to **Amy M. Tabler, Assistant to the V.P. and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. Equal opportunity employer.

Meadows Mennonite Home, a 130-bed intermediate-care (skilled/Medicare certification in process) nursing facility in rural Chenoa, Ill., is seeking a **director of nursing**. The ideal candidate must have recent experience as a DON or ADON in long-term care as well as strong clinical, leadership and human resource skills. R.N. required. A proven track record of results in state and federal surveys and knowledge of IDPH and OBRA guidelines a must. A desire to care for the elderly in a Christian environment is required.

We offer an excellent salary and benefits package. Please send or fax resume to **Jana Schopp, Assistant Administrator, Meadows Mennonite Home, R.R. 1, Box 310, Chenoa, IL 61726; (309) 747-2702; fax (309) 747-2944**.

Bluffton College seeks a **director of multicultural affairs** to develop and implement programs to meet the special personal, social and cultural needs of minority and international students. Half-time appointment to the teaching faculty in the area of the candidate's expertise is expected; master's degree (Ph.D. preferred). Screening begins Oct. 16 and will continue until the position is filled.

Send letter of application and resume to **Donald L. Schweingruber, Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196; (419) 358-3247**. Bluffton College is an equal opportunity employer.

Faculty position in art: Full-time position beginning fall 1996. M.F.A. required. Teaching experience at the college level preferred. Evidence of academic leadership and entrepreneurial skills highly desirable. Responsibilities: To assist further development of the art major and minor and to give visibility to the program. To teach ceramics and basic art courses. EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and resume **by Nov. 15** to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**.

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Telephone **Gary Franz at (316) 283-5100,** or write **GCMC, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Foothills Mennonite Church is seeking a full-time **pastoral leader**. We are a dynamic, urban church with an active membership of over 200. The role of the pastor includes the following:
- to provide a caring, compassionate and conciliatory ministry;
- to provide spiritual direction to the congregation;
- to participate in a teaching and preaching ministry;
- to engage in an equipping ministry, affirming and encouraging the gifts and abilities of individual members and groups;
- to work with worship committees in planning meaningful, integrated worship experiences;
- to demonstrate a strong Anabaptist faith.

Inquiries and resumes should be sent to **Pastoral Search Committee, Foothills Mennonite Church, 2115 Urbana Road N.W., Calgary, AB T2N 4B9.** Screening of applications will begin Nov. 15 and will continue until the position is filled.

The International Guest House, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, is seeking an **assistant host or hostess** to fill an immediate opening for a one-year voluntary service assignment. Responsibilities include the usual tasks for operating a bed and breakfast facility but with the added dimension of relating to international guests in a Christian homelike setting. Cross-cultural experience desirable.

Contact **Annabelle Kratz, Board Chair, 13495 Brighton Dam Road, Clarksville, MD 21029; (301) 596-9057.**

Goshen College announces a faculty opening in **acute-care nursing**. Doctoral preparation preferred. Master's degree in nursing required. Goshen College is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply send a resume and three professional references to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526.** Applications will be received until position is filled. Men and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Goshen College seeks faculty for a full-time position as **laboratory kindergarten teacher and director of early childhood education program** beginning July 1, 1996. Preferred qualifications include doctorate in early childhood education, teaching experience in college teacher education programs and experience in working with children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Responsibilities include teaching in half-day laboratory kindergarten and a course in early childhood education each semester and supervising kindergarten and early childhood student teachers. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Men and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and three letters of recommendation to **John D. Nyce, Interim Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.** Applications will be received until the position is filled. If you have further questions, call John Nyce at **(219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

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Reviews

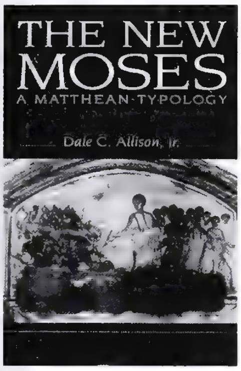
BOOKS

MOSES-MATTHEW CONNECTION

The New Moses: A Matthean Typology *by Dale C. Allison Jr. (Fortress Press, 1993, 396 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, editor

This is a scholarly book that most readers will find difficult. However, it includes an abundance of insights into the Gospel of Matthew that will reward the careful reader.



Allison and renowned New Testament scholar W.D. Davies have recently completed a three-volume commentary on Matthew in the International Critical Commentary series. This book serves as an expansion of an important theme in Matthew that their commentary, says Allison in the preface, "has not proved sufficiently spacious" to demonstrate.

The point of this book, in a nutshell, is that for Matthew, Jesus was "the hermeneutical key to unlocking the religious meaning of the Jewish Bible" and that "the Jewish Bible was for him the hermeneutical key to unlocking the religious meaning of Jesus."

Allison demonstrates, with thoroughness and clearly argued logic, that Matthew's Gospel portrays Jesus as a new Moses, one who fulfills the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15 of God raising up "a prophet like [Moses]." The author's grasp of literary sources and the breadth of knowledge he displays—from literary theory to the church fathers to theology to science fiction—is remarkable.

Again, this is not a book for everyone. But those willing to tackle its thesis and follow it through will have a greater understanding of and appreciation for the Gospel of Matthew.

GOD IN WEAK THINGS

The Power of the Powerless *by Christopher de Vinck (Zondervan, 1995, 151 pages)*

Reviewed by Bonita Suter, Mt. Horeb, Wis.

Oliver was born with severe brain damage, resulting from a gas leak in the house during his mother's third month of pregnancy. He never learned to talk or walk. He could not feed, dress or bathe himself. Yet through Christopher de Vinck's account of Oliver's influence in their lives, it is evident that Oliver demonstrated the "power of the powerless" during his 32 years of life.

The openness with which de Vinck speaks of his brother, Oliver, led to publication in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Post* and *Reader's Digest*. Following publication of his brief essays, Christopher de Vinck received correspondence from people across the country who could identify in some way with Oliver and his family. These people wanted to share pieces of their stories with an author who had touched their hearts. He read every letter that he received and responded to many of them by traveling to meet the person who had written. *The Power of the Powerless* includes numerous excerpts from and reflections on these candid interviews.

De Vinck encourages us to discover how, without ever saying a word, Oliver's life teaches us about service, holiness, poverty and love. He says that "we look into the eyes of the other and we see ourselves."

I recommend this book for teachers and social workers in the field of special education and for anyone who knows a family that is dealing with issues similar to Oliver's. Christopher de Vinck clearly cares for the people that he met as a result of his initial article. He does not attempt to glamorize the lives of the families he interviews, nor does he try to gain pity for them. Instead, he asks them for their story. From these readings it becomes clear that "God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

LIFEBLOOD OF CPS

Peace Was in Their Hearts *by Richard C. Anderson (Correlan Publications, 1994, 318 pages)*

Reviewed by Loris Habegger, North Newton, Kan.

As one who served 4 1/2 years in Civilian Public Service (CPS) in World War II, I found Anderson's book a readable, stimulating and carefully crafted piece. The author lists his purpose as explaining "what the

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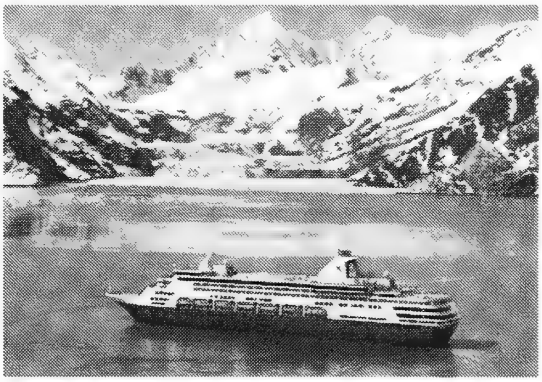

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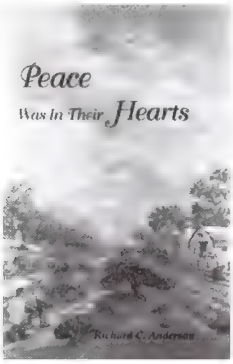
conscientious objectors did during that war, but more importantly, why they rejected service in the military."

The lifeblood of CPS runs through the pages. It is obvious the author shared the experience himself, which gives the work authenticity. The book will help CPS participants refresh their memories, feel once again the pangs of decision and the joy of achievement. At the same time it is a good way to have children and grandchildren trace the lives of fathers and grandfathers who served in the alternate service program.



Anderson shares the consternation of church workers who labored to construct the program to be under civilian direction but had to settle for military direction.

He takes us through the trials and pain of being drafted, of making decisions at a crucial time in our national history. We relive successfully receiving the 4-E (conscientious objector) classification, being transported to the first camp (usually a former Civilian Conservation Corps camp) for forestry and wildlife conservation effort, all in the effort to isolate CPSers from mainstream society where emotions were at fever pitch.

The pages reflect the emotional and administrative issues in construction of the CPS program and the issues of the drafted CPS men. One catches the conflicts raging in the military, the government, among the CPS men and among the average citizens of the United States.

A major feature is the summation of questionnaire responses submitted by CPS people as they reflect on their time in CPS and since: their service, their vocational choices since then, and the way their lives were altered by their service. As a result we get the picture of the CPS individual experience as well as the corporate experience.

The summation of the reasoned theology and philosophy that prompted the men then and now in their decision to serve as conscientious objectors is excellent. A fine index and bibliography add to the worth of the book. It should be in church libraries as one of the resources relating to the witness of the men of Civilian Public Service.

A MURDERED CHILD

Harsh Grief, Gentle Hope *by Mary A. White (Navpress, 1995, 158 pages)*

Reviewed by Melanie Mueller, Newton, Kan.

"There is not a word in the English language to describe the loss of a child. 'Widow' describes the loss of a spouse; 'orphan' defines loss of mother and father; but when bereaved parents need to tell of their suffering, no single word carries the painful message. Instead, parents have to state the achingly sad fact every time.

"'My son died.'

"'My daughter was killed.'

"'Someone murdered my child.'"

So begins the preface to a moving account of a family losing its only son, Steve, to murder. The author's husband, Jerry, is general director for The Navigators; both he and Mary are involved in various ministries taking them all over the United States.

The story begins with the Whites in Columbus, Ohio, ready to present a seminar at a conference there. The hotel room phone rings. And immediately the reader plunges, along with Mary and Jerry, into the horror of their son's murder.

The book's chapters deal with the events and work of coping with death, starting with the initial disbelief and hope that it really wasn't their son, to viewing the body, attending the memorial service, finding comfort in memories and living through the first year.

White's writing captures in stunning detail her myriad thoughts and raging emotions. The narrative of events is written on one track, while her own inner turmoil and God's responses are italicized. People who have had a loved one die unexpectedly will resonate with these agonized inner conversations.

The first several chapters are especially gripping as the horror sets in, as the Whites tell the news to their three daughters, as family members and friends arrive to comfort and grieve and as the family deals with the ongoing police investigation.

Steve White's murderer eventually was found. Mary White describes her feelings as she saw the murderer in the courtroom: "I felt surprisingly neutral. ... Although I had seen his picture in the newspaper, seeing him in person didn't elicit the strong feelings of rage or despair or grief I had anticipated. Instead, I felt a huge wave of loss sweep over me. How could this man take Steve from us? How could he deliberately blow away his head, watch him die, and then walk away?"

Time does heal. And White writes that only with God's help and by going to the past, letting all the memories wash over her again and again, was she able to feel healing begin.

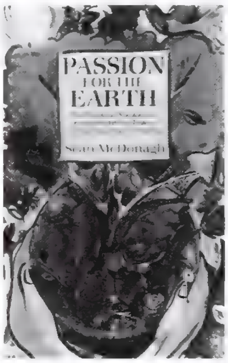
Harsh Grief, Gentle Hope is a story of heartbreak and "soul-break," but also a story of restoration and healing.

KEEPING GOD'S EARTH

Passion for the Earth: The Christian Vocation to Promote Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation *by Sean McDonagh (Orbis, 1994, 164 pages)*

Reviewed by Jocele T. Meyer, Fresno, Ohio

Sean McDonagh, a Catholic priest with experience in the Philippines, calls Christians, individually and collectively, to honor God, their Creator, by caring for all of creation. He writes simply, with a broad understanding of current environmental and justice issues. This book, like his earlier writings, is well-documented with a variety of reliable sources.



Readers are reminded that "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it" (Psalm 24:1). Humankind has disregarded this familiar Scripture and individually and collectively misused resources for gain.

McDonagh says the global community through government and the church has made some attempts to correct problems. However, he states that in the political arena the solutions are in a "business as usual" approach that only tends to exacerbate the situation. This approach promotes rapid economic growth and does not take into consideration limits to growth. He says that any attempt to solve the problem needs to devise ways that respect limits and ensure that people's basic needs are met. He promotes a more sustainable approach to food production, energy use, security and waste management.

McDonagh's analysis of current trade systems challenges the policies of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, World Bank and International Monetary Fund. He says they benefit primarily the rich nations of the North. Nongovernment organizations, he feels, are more in touch with the needs of the poor and oppressed.

He calls the religious community to a prophetic ministry, critiquing the current inequity and stirring Christians to imagine sustainable ways of living.

McDonagh sees the entire picture of injustice in caring for God's creation and succinctly explains the current picture. He defines the inadequacy of current systems and suggests appropriate responses. There is hope as people become aware of degradation to creation and as they make changes that honor the Creator and respect all of creation.

HOW-TO FOR FATHERS

Fathering the Next Generation: Men Mentoring Men *by William J. Jarema (Crossroad, 1994, 191 pages)*

Reviewed by Heinz Janzen, North Newton, Kan.

The media have heralded the collapse of family. In response we see home schooling, parenting courses and now the fathering movement. The latter is promoted by such varied voices as Robert Bly's *Iron John* and Bill McCartney of Promise Keepers.

Catholic lay leader William Jarema adds his voice with still another approach to fathering. His book is in three sections: (1) Five Unhealthy Fathering Styles, (2) Five Healthy Fathering Styles and (3) Where Do I Begin? Throughout the book each major point is illustrated with personal interviews and with quotes from a wide body of literature.

The first section repelled me, until I saw its place in the larger scheme. Too many people wrongly assume that all fathers are fit for their task. The section on helpful fathering plows fresh ground with a variety of fathering methods: elder, companion, champion, mystic and mentor. While it is helpful to separate these for analysis, likely any father will combine some of these elements.

Jarema is well aware of our imperfect human condition. He does not propose some kind of ideal home and fathering relation. His last section, "Where Do I Begin?" begins with the need to forgive one's own father for any imperfections and wounds. He goes on to propose a variety of ways for one to be fathered, even in adulthood, and thus become a healthy father in turn.

His chapter "Masculinity Revisited" approaches the thorny question of what is unique about male identity and role. He suggests that the strength and drives of the male body shape a man's relation to God and to others, both men and women. Possibly this is the flip side of the current longing for a women's theology and style of relating. Certainly more will be said on this topic in the future, but Jarema points a healthy direction.

This book could be read alone but would be better studied in a group of men who try the exercises suggested.

Resources

- **Sarah** by Mary Christner Borntrager (Herald Press, 1995, $6.95 U.S./$9.95 Cdn.) is the eighth volume in the "Ellie's People" series of novels on Amish life.
- **Meditations for the Newly Married** by John M. Drescher (Herald Press, 1995, $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.) covers issues related to marriage and includes prayers, poetry and Bible study suggestions.
- **1 and 2 Thessalonians** by Jacob W. Elias (Herald Press, 1995, $17.95 U.S./ $25.75 Cdn.) is the seventh volume in the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series.
- **The Essential Carlstadt: Fifteen Tracts by Andreas Bodenstein (Carlstadt) from Karlstadt**, translated and edited by E.J. Furcha (Herald Press, 1995, $49.95 U.S./$71.25 Cdn. hardcover) presents the first major collection in one volume of writings by Radical Reformer Carlstadt.
- **A Non-Churchgoer's Guide to the Bible** by Michael Gantt (Good Books, 1995, $15.95 U.S.) is an easy-to-read, "user-friendly" guide to the Bible.
- **Rwanda: Where Is the Hope?** (18-minute video), **MCC Assisting Rwandan Refugees** (7-minute video) and **After Rwanda (CKCO-TV)** (30-minute video) tell of the Rwandan crisis and Zairian and North American Mennonite responses. Available from all MCC offices, or call MCC Akron at (717) 859-1151.
- **Step of Faith** (24-minute video) tells the work of MCC Canada in employment development in British Columbia, conflict resolution in Winnipeg, Native economic development in northwest Ontario and in an AIDS hospice in Montreal. Available from all MCC offices, or call MCC Akron at (717) 859-1151.
- **Hinduism: An Ancient Path in the Modern World** (20-minute video) looks at Hinduism's roots and present-day influence in India and the world. For high school to adult audiences. Available from MCC Akron, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151.
- **Working It Out** (30-minute video) is the story of two teenagers unable to resolve their differences. The video explains peer mediation—teens helping other teens deal with conflict. Study guide included. Available from MCC Akron at (717) 859-1151; or MCC Manitoba, (204) 261-6381.
- **Teaching in China** (14-minute video) describes the China Educational Exchange program and looks at the church in China. Available from MCC Akron at (717) 859-1151; or MCC Manitoba, (204) 261-6381.
- **The Angels Have Left Us: The Rwanda Tragedy and the Churches** by Hugh McCullum (World Council of Churches Publications, 1995, $12.50 U.S.) asks what the church and the wider church family should do in today's world. To order call 1-800-523-8211.
- **Religion, Law and Society: A Christian-Muslim Discussion**, edited by Tarek Mitri (World Council of Churches Publications, 1995, $15.50 U.S.), offers essays by Muslim and Christian writers on human rights, the Islamic revival and the role of religious institutions. To order call 1-800-523-8211.

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Editorial

An insidious disease

Addiction, writes Sarah Rhodes (see page 4), is a disease that usually becomes a family problem. It is also a church problem and a society problem, one we dare not ignore.

Addiction is a "compulsive physiological need for a habit-forming drug," according to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. "Drug" may refer to anything from caffeine to sleeping pills to alcohol to heroin. While any addiction causes problems, in this issue we focus on tobacco, alcohol and "illegal drugs" such as marijuana, cocaine, heroin or LSD.

Yet distinguishing drugs by their legality is not always helpful. While smoking is legal, nicotine is considered one of the most addictive of substances. Smoking is the leading cause of avoidable, premature death. Tobacco products are responsible for more than 400,000 deaths each year in the United States due to cancer, respiratory illness, heart disease and other health problems. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that in 1993 the health-care costs associated with smoking totaled $50 billion.

Alcohol, also legal, takes an enormous toll as well, including vehicle-related deaths and violence against spouses, children and others, not to mention costs related to lost productivity. Mothers Against Drunk Driving has accumulated many statistics about the effects of drinking on driving-related injuries and deaths:

- for drivers with blood alcohol content levels (BACs) above 0.15 on weekend nights, the likelihood of being killed in a single-vehicle crash is more than 380 times higher than it is for non-drinking drivers;
- the driver, pedestrian or both were intoxicated (0.1 BAC or greater) in 40.1 percent of all fatal pedestrian crashes in 1993 in the United States;
- about 24 percent of fatally injured 15- to 20-year-old drivers in 1994 were intoxicated.

While tobacco use has declined in the past decade overall, it has increased among youth (except among African-American teens). Tobacco is one of the "gateway drugs" (see page 7) that often lead to use of other drugs.

Many teens use alcohol, despite underage drinking laws. Laws against alcohol's use are not effective. I recall a spring night "kegger" held by Newton, Kan., high school students that many people knew about. I asked how they got their beer. Mostly from parents, someone told me. Meanwhile, the police did not stop it.

In the Bible, wine is often depicted as a symbol of joy. Witness Jesus at the wedding at Cana (John 2) producing wine for the celebration. Wine is also a powerful sign of Jesus' blood of the new covenant.

Today, however, we are immersed in ads for alcoholic drinks. We see TV and movie depictions of (often unrealistically harmless) drinking, while we live with the destructive effects of alcohol abuse.

Trouble at school: Elementary school workers have told me that last year the one consistent factor among their students who got into trouble at school was alcohol or other drug abuse by parents. Factors like economic status, education level, race or number of parents at home all varied, but in every case alcohol or drugs were involved.

Addiction is insidious. It evolves slowly, without our being aware. It is sinister. It often develops from something that at least appears good. People generally don't take drugs or drink because it makes them feel bad. Addiction is a dangerous enticement. It is particularly dangerous for adolescents, whose physiology makes them more susceptible to a drug's addictive power.

Sarah Rhodes describes the painful journey of her family as they encountered her son's addiction (see pages 3-5). Although theirs was a churchgoing family that tried to do the right things, they had to face many problems because of addiction. And they found no rosy answers. What they needed —and what we all need—was support from others.

The glib expression "just say no" has not proved effective. There are no simple solutions to addiction. But we can be informed and offer support to those among us who face this disease, whether in themselves or in their families. We can support laws that help curb drug abuse (like drunk-driving laws or laws against selling cigarettes to adolescents). Above all we can pray, pray for healing from this demonic disease. *Gordon Houser*

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Two windows and a solitary place / p. 11

How to grant a loan and keep a relationship / p. 12

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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WORK: vocation or necessity?

- When days are painfully slow (see page 3)
- 4 things I need from church (see page 6)

Prologue

This issue gives a cursory look at the topic of work. As with most of our issues, we cannot provide an exhaustive treatment of a subject, but we hope to stimulate thought, feeling and discussion.

Frank Soto Albrecht (page 3) reflects on the plight of a couple of people he has come to know in Colombia, where he serves with Elizabeth, his wife, under the General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission. He not only informs us of their hardships but helps us feel them as well.

Jim Smucker (page 6) speaks to the church as an entrepreneur. He asks four things from the church that will help him feel a part of it. What do you think? Is he right to expect these things from the church, or is he asking too much? Write us your opinions.

Two short poems of thanksgiving (pages 5 and 8) grace this issue. Each calls us to trust God in our work and our being.

Brad Kunkel (page 10) takes a lighthearted poke at how Mennonites define themselves.

Marlene Kropf (page 11) lifts up Julian of Norwich, a 14th-century English mystic, as an example of how to combine prayer and ministry.

J.B. Miller (page 12) discusses the ticklish dilemma of what to do when a relative or friend wants to borrow money.

May God bless your work and help make it joyful and constructive. *gh*

Next issue: Church growth: success and failure

Cover: Photo by Rick Reinhard/WCC

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

***The Mennonite* (ISSN 0025-9330)** is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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How do we square working to survive with utilizing the creative gifts God has given us?

Frank Soto Albrecht

When days are painfully slow

Today went by fast,” she said to me as she got ready to leave the birthday party we threw for her nephew. I agreed with her, but her words hit me hard.

Her name is Zulma, a 39-year-old single woman. She lives with her brother, Rudercindo, and his wife, Gloria, and their eight children. Rudercindo leaves home at 4:30 a.m., returns at 8:30 p.m., works six days per week as a guard and receives no holidays or vacation time the first year. He makes $190 U.S. per month.

Zulma's life consists of work, caring for her brother's children, sleeping and eating. For her, having a day off and not needing to cook, clean or be the primary caregiver to her nieces and nephews is rare. Such days seem to go by too fast.

It's hard for me to imagine what it would be like to work eight hours ironing and cleaning for $2.40. Zulma has to ride a bus three hours per day, and when she returns home, she is surrounded by children.

She was offered a full-time job for $85 per month: seven full days per week, in-house child care. I earned $120 per day as a teacher when I left Lancaster, Pa. The cost of living here in Colombia may be lower overall than in North America, but eggs are $1 a dozen and milk is $1.60 per gallon. Clothes are comparable in price, and house mortgages are at 25 percent and increase not annually but monthly. The annual inflation rate is around 24 percent.

Once I volunteered in Cachipay at the Mennonite retreat center. We poured the second story floor to a building that was being remodeled. Since there were not enough volunteers, the center hired men for the day.

No joke: I worked with Henri, who is my age, 35. He is married, with three children. He works six days per week, at least eight hours per day, and makes $120 per month. The day we worked together, he worked from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. He was in charge of putting the cement bags into the mixer. Hoisting 80-pound bags of cement all day long is no joke. We took turns, each of us lifting about 100 bags. I rubbed my arms raw. His arms were used to this procedure, so he fared better.

We opened the bags, stood before the gas-powered cement mixer as it spewed forth water and stones and a

We have a responsibility to respond to those around us whose days go by slowly.

bit of cement onto our clothes, our hair and into our faces. He was shirtless and wore his shoes without socks. He had a piece of material wrapped around his head that reached half-way down his back. Each time he emptied a bag of cement into the mixer that seemed to be turning at 5,000 rpms, he would put the rag into his mouth. I finally figured out that he did this to keep from inhaling the fine cement dust particles that came flying back in his face each time he emptied a bag of this needed but deadly ingredient. The rag started out the day pure white. It ended a distinct gray.

Between our trips to the mixer we talked. Henri grew up and lived in a small pueblo, Cachipay, where the first Mennonites to Colombia, Gerald and Mary Hope Stucky, decided to open a home for children of parents with leprosy.

I marveled all day at the ability of this man to work under such difficult conditions for only $5 per day. "One day we opened and used 250 bags of cement," he said proudly. "We really had a rhythm going that day." What is it that motivates these people to work when all they receive is minimum wage?

I knew I could continue working all day long. For me the end was in sight. Blisters and all, I could plug along, working off the energy knowing that we were doing a necessary work, and that this difficult work would end for me that evening. How would I feel, I wondered, if this were Monday evening, and I had five more of these days waiting for me this week, and each week of the year would be more of the same? It really was more than I could fathom.

Frank Soto Albrecht

Days off go too fast: *Zulma at work*

Gunpowder: I asked Henri what he does for fun. "I like sports," he said. I assumed he was talking about soccer, since almost everyone here has some connections to Colombia's favorite game. "No, I play 'tejo,'" he said. This game is played something like horseshoes, but instead of throwing iron horseshoes, rocks are thrown into clay that is shaped at an incline. In the center of the clay is a little gunpowder. Standing approximately 50 feet from the opposite pit, the men throw rocks trying to explode the little bit of powder.

To enter the game, one must purchase a case of beer. Each time a person wins, everyone playing must give that person a beer. My understanding is that the game continues as long as there is available beer.

I understand why this game has such appeal for the working class here. If I worked for $2.40 a day ironing clothes, or made $5 daily working in a greenhouse in 120-degree heat without water to drink, or worked in the fields six days a week for an equal amount, or opened bags of cement 50 hours each week, if I worked in this land for only the minimal wages that the majority of my Colombian brothers and sisters make, I might drink myself drunk every chance I got.

So much of my self-esteem over the last 15 years has come from the realization that I am using the gifts and talents God has given me in the vocation I have chosen. Being able to feel that each day I am being used by God to further the kingdom is wonderful.

I believe this was how God designed the world. We have all been created in the image of God. This means we are all gifted, creative individuals who have ourselves and our talents to share with the rest of the world. Each of us is to bring honor and praise to our Creator, and one way of doing this is by using our vocation as an avenue to utilize this creative force within us.

People like Zulma and Henri, who must work to survive, may not see a connection between their gifts and talents and their work. They may not even be aware that they are gifted and talented. The owner of the cement business is getting rich off Henri and his co-workers. The person who hires Zulma to do ironing for $2.40 a day may make 10 times that in one hour. Hired help here are often treated like

How would I feel if this were Monday evening, and I had five more of these days waiting for me this week, and each week of the year would be more of the same?

servants who have little significance.

Like a slave: A friend of mine, who has cleaned for a local agency for three years, says she feels like a slave. But being a single mother, pregnant and with two school-age children, she sees no other option. She travels two hours one way to work, works from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. six days per week and receives $120 per month. What are her chances of getting ahead in life? What makes a day go by quickly for her? If I were in her shoes, what would I do?

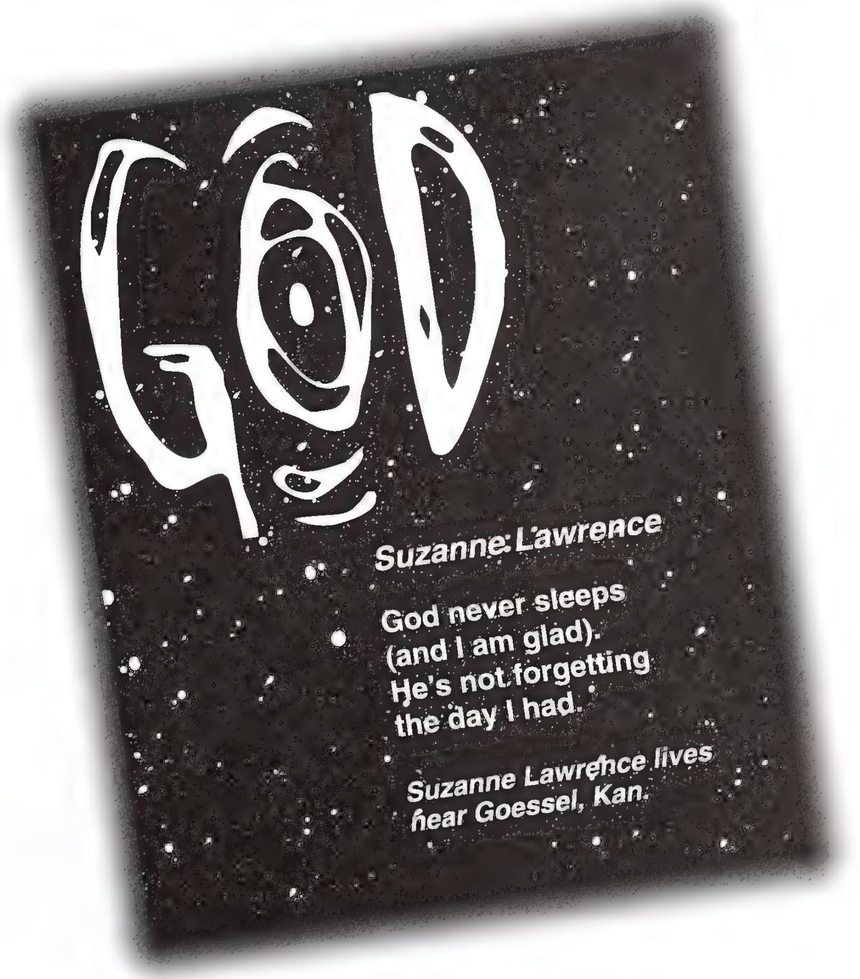
What responsibilities do we who are wealthy Christians have when we hear stories like these? We have a responsibility to respond to those around us whose days go by slowly. First, instead of isolating ourselves from people in these situations, we should get to know and interact with and love them. Second, we should allow ourselves to be loved by these people. And third, both parties should share their resources.

The birthday party we had for Zulma's 12-year-old nephew, we found out later, was the first one he'd ever had. In fact, no one in his family had ever had a celebration of their birthday. Helping people celebrate special occasions or rites of passage is an opportunity to connect with them. The gift of life we receive in return is immeasurable.

Today seemed to fly by for me. I gave a seminar on self-esteem to energized and excited fourth and fifth graders. I then came home while there was still daylight, played a little soccer with my neighbor boys and took my daughter on a 90-minute walk. I will relax tonight.

Each day is a little different for me, full of life. I am fortunate. Yet as I enjoy a life of variety, I remember that many people all over the world do not enjoy varied experiences in their day. Their days go by painfully slowly. I want to enter the lives of these people and allow them to enter mine. For in being with these people I, too, am energized, we experience a positive change, and I know that in our being together we are in the presence of God.

Frank Soto Albrecht lives in Bogota, Colombia, where he and Elizabeth, his wife, are serving a three-year term under the Commission on Overseas Mission.



Suzanne Lawrence

God never sleeps
(and I am glad).
He's not forgetting
the day I had.

Suzanne Lawrence lives near Goessel, Kan.

4 things I need from church

Ways the church can embrace and work with members who are entrepreneurs

Jim Smucker

Our Anabaptist tradition is one of service. So we ask the question, "What can I do for my church?" But as a Christian entrepreneur, lately I've been asking, "What can my church do for me?" as I struggle with issues of faith, work and spiritual calling.

For a number of years after I graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College, I struggled with career choices. I enjoyed my work in my father's business, but there was a question always gnawing at the back of my mind: "Shouldn't I be doing something that is directly related to mission work, to serving others?"

As all graduates of Goshen College will tell you, the motto of "Culture for Service" is indelibly etched on our minds. During special mission weeks, representatives from various mission boards display information on service opportunities. And countless times throughout my life, I have listened spellbound to the stories of missionaries having just returned from "over there."

Furthermore, over the years in various church settings I've heard the warnings of the dangers of wealth and the seduction of power that wealth brings. Subtly the message becomes clear. We build the kingdom in the mission field, not in the business world. My father and many other Christian entrepreneurs have struggled with this dilemma for many years. On the one hand, the church depends on our money in the offering basket; on the other hand, it is often suspicious of how that money is obtained.

Many of the tensions this dilemma creates on both sides point to a lack of understanding of what I believe is the true task of the Christian entrepreneur. I would argue that as we look at the mission of both a preacher and an entrepreneur, we find more similarities than differences. One of the fundamental tasks of each is to provide conditions that enable people to lead the most enriching lives possible.

To help me resolve this dilemma, to help me live the life of integrity to which Christ calls me, I need at least four things from the church.

1 I need the church to recognize that I have a spiritual calling to be an entrepreneur. Those of us who are entrepreneurs in the Christian tradition have a calling to produce organizations friendly to spiritual values. This can help accelerate positive change in our world. Entrepreneurs, because of their tremendous resources, have their hands resting on the levers of change.

Albert Einstein said it this way: "In the case of political, and even of religious leaders, it is often very doubtful whether they have done more good or harm. Hence, I most seriously believe that one does people the best service by giving them some elevating work to do and thus indirectly elevating them."

Given the influences of entrepreneurs in today's world, this indirect elevation may be one of the most powerful steps toward helping us make our world a better place.

Unfortunately, the idea of entrepreneurship as a spiritual calling, of an entrepreneur as a change agent, creates another dilemma for the Christian businessperson. Many times the theology of the church, implied if not always stated, has treated with skepticism the potential of a spiritual calling to business. This is not only hard for our church communities to grasp, it is also a difficult concept in our bottom-line oriented business world, where a spiritual calling is seen as "soft" and idealistic.

2 I need the church to be a model for the type of organization that Christ calls for. Our organizations are killing us. The prevailing system of management has destroyed our people.

At first glance these statements may seem exaggerated. However, we see evidence of this evil throughout modern society. Of course there are exceptions. But many of us today at all levels in our workplaces find our individual spirituality and wholeness sacrificed on altars created by

Our organizations are killing us. The prevailing system of management has destroyed our people.

modern organizations.

It saddens me, then, to see that many of our churches have been bitten by the "bottom-line" bug. They have adopted characteristics of the industrial model for organizing.

It was Calvin Coolidge in the mid-1920s who said, "The business of America is business." As a culture and as churches we have taken this to heart. As sociologist Tony Campolo suggests, there is evidence all around that our churches are structured more in accord with the organizing principles of the industrial model than by a pattern perceived as ordained by New Testament teachings.

Today churches "process" new members, their pastors (CEOs) run multimillion-dollar businesses. They build ever larger churches in keeping with the concept of "economies of scale." They have organized in hierarchies of increasing levels of authority, where the power is in the hands of the few. They frequently motivate by fear.

Amazingly, as a church, we have always had the answer to this subversion before our eyes in the New Testament. Unfortunately the business world has at times been quicker to pick up biblical values than the church. Increasingly, from the boardrooms of corporate America, we are hearing of Christ-like upside-down approaches to organizing and managing people. This new vision for leadership includes developing covenants with employees, becoming servant leaders, understanding the value of small, close-knit, accountable communities, ensuring equality for everyone, building relationships based on trust, and applying agape love.

I need the church to provide a model of the possibilities for organizing around these biblical values.

3 I need the church's support for being a different kind of entrepreneur. One of the underlying and often unspoken assumptions of traditional management—and one of the paramount dilemmas for the Christian businessperson—is that maximizing profits and genuinely caring for the welfare of people are mutually exclusive. In other words, the realities of the marketplace seem to require a level of morality in business that is lower than in our personal lives.

As Christian entrepreneurs, however, we must believe differently. We must believe that there doesn't have to be a trade-off between the higher virtues in life and economic success over the long run. We can and must do both. We must recognize that people with a high level of self-esteem are more committed, take more initiative and have a broader and deeper sense of responsibility in their work. They learn faster. When people genuinely approve of themselves, they can afford to be responsive to the needs and wants of others.

To employ this type of person, however, requires the businessperson to place the development of people alongside financial success. This idea should not only be liberating for the Christian businessperson. It should also encourage us to seek new ways to organize work. While our traditional organizations have required management to control people's behavior, the Christian entrepreneur will turn the tables upside-down by empowering people to participate.

4 I need the church to embrace change rather than fear it. The pathology of our organizations that I've just outlined also provides us with an opportunity—building organizations friendly to human values.

Unfortunately, many of us are caught by fear, afraid of how fundamentally our work lives would have to change if we lived out of this vision. As churches and business, we are

The challenge, for both entrepreneurs and the church, is to creatively work together more effectively to bring about positive change in our communities.

caught in old models—models that have brought financial success for businesspeople and growth for our churches. The promise is that a new way of relating to people will be both professionally and spiritually more rewarding if we only take the leap of faith to embrace it.

Here again, the church can help me by example. In keeping with the values and mission of Christ's life, the church can encourage each of us to reinterprete our faith constantly in light of the needs of a changing humanity. This should liberate Christian businesspeople to respond accordingly to the changing marketplace.

So much has been written about the dizzying rates of change in today's world. Christian entrepreneurs and the church need each other today more than ever. As a Christian entrepreneur in this fast-changing world, I need the understanding, support and nourishment of the church more than ever.

As a church, we need to acknowledge the powerful role entrepreneurs can have in the spiritual lives of our members. The challenge, for both entrepreneurs and the church, is to creatively work together more effectively to bring about positive change in our communities.

Jim Smucker is a partner in a family business in Bird-in-Hand, Pa. He attends Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church. This article is reprinted from the July 14, 1992, issue of Gospel Herald.

Giving thanks

Lucille Gripp Maharry

Sometimes, Lord,
we need to give thanks
with gratitude for little:
the skimpy meal,
the blighted crops,
the reversal of our greatest expectations.

We need to be
thankful for what we have,
facing the lack,
the loss,
the frustration as it really is,
trusting in you.
For only then
can you take the remnants of our hopes
and change them
to fulfill our deepest needs.

Lucille Gripp Maharry lives in Creston, Iowa.

Letters

THE VALUE OF ART

Here's an "artistic" thank you for the fine issue on art in the church (Sept. 12 issue). My "Chicken Guts" looks at home in the issue, and I congratulate you on the gathering of articles and artists. Your editorial is a fine argument for the value of what I try to do. Thank you for this encouraging issue. *Jean Janzen, Fresno, Calif.*

THE PLACE OF WOMEN

As the editor notes, it was women who were first at the cradle and last at the cross (Editorial, Sept. 26 issue). It is also interesting to note that women were first to have seen the risen Christ on Easter. One also reads that Mary conversed with an angel, which none of the disciples seems ever to have been privileged to do. *Robert Erck, Lombard, Ill.*

TONE OF ANGRY JUDGMENT

The early Anabaptists brought a great deal of wrath upon themselves by challenging some cherished church doctrines, but they did not challenge all questionable doctrines. I am in sympathy with Jerry Stanaway's position expressed in the Aug. 8 issue (page 11). I believe one can be a follower of Jesus and quite able to honor the Holy Spirit without firmly and certainly understanding God to be comprised of three persons. Abe Janzen, in the Oct. 8 issue (page 11), is over-interpreting Matthew 12:32 if he thinks that passage names the Holy Spirit as a "Person of God." I find no merit in claiming certainty regarding the unknowable, and again none in forcing that uncertain certainty upon others.

The Trinitarian dogma was established in A.D. 325 with the Nicene Creed. In 1553, at the behest of John Calvin, Michael Servetus was burned at the stake for challenging Trinitarian doctrine (while Anabaptists were being burned at the stake for challenging other doctrines.)

It doesn't bother me that there is disagreement with Stanaway's position. It doesn't disturb me that some find his position upsetting. What bothers me is the tone of angry judgment in Janzen's letter. Janzen states that "repentance may be in order" for Stanaway. As a Mennonite, a member of a group that has suffered persecution for its faith, Janzen might consider repentance of his angry attack. *Weeden Nichols, Hays, Kan.*

FROM OUR MISSION WORKERS

Fukuoka, Japan—Recently we have had a few new people coming to meetings. Some seekers have dropped out, so we are happy to have newcomers.

In August I spent five days as volunteer interpreter for the Universiade Games in Fukuoka. I was assigned to a basketball gym and first spent three days with practicing teams. It was exciting to make friends with the Canadian women's basketball team. I asked one girl if she knew whether there were any Christians on the team, and she said, "I'm one." Then I spent two days interpreting at the real games. Exciting, especially when Korea beat Finland 101-100 with the ball spinning around on the rim in the last few seconds. A visit to the village gave me a little foretaste of heaven—people from all nations. *Mary and Peter Derksen*

Lesotho—After a week and a half of intense orientation to office responsibilities, various agencies and personnel, we loaded the 4 by 4 with what we thought necessities to live for a month in a village, which proved to be challenging, rewarding and disappointing at the same time.

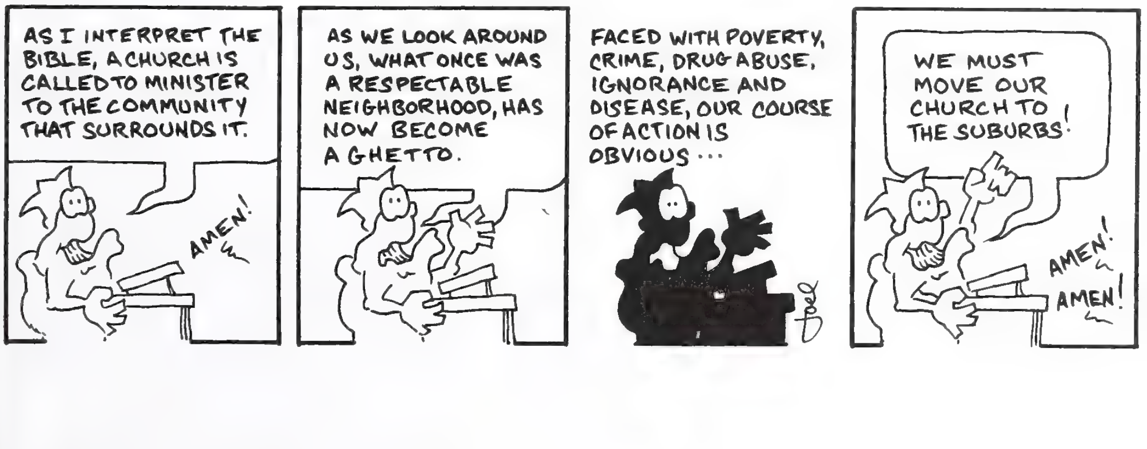
We stayed with a group of six children. The eldest was 21 and the youngest 3. The father of the house had died in 1993, which meant all the family responsibilities fell on the eldest. The mother was a housekeeper for a teacher four kilometers down the hill. These children faced poverty every day. Although Mennonite Central Committee had issued token funds to help in the purchase of food during our stay, this was all the money available to them. We came back to Maseru with a 25-pound weight loss between us. Identifying with the locals in trying to attend to daily responsibilities or going to bed with incessant, gnawing hunger pangs became a reality.

We ended up sharing the maize that provided us our daily "papa" with the two- and four-legged creatures that freely roamed the yard. The animals found a way to remove the canvas draped over the maize.

Our rewards came through the many people we met. The children brought their inquisitive eyes, comments and fascination with our silver and red hair. People shared their testimony of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

We participated in the community worship services. The activities, people contacts and church involvements gave us joy, belonging, fellowship and purpose during our village live-in. *Betty and Bill Enns*

Pontius' Puddle


AS I INTERPRET THE BIBLE, A CHURCH IS CALLED TO MINISTER TO THE COMMUNITY THAT SURROUNDS IT.
AMEN!
AS WE LOOK AROUND US, WHAT ONCE WAS A RESPECTABLE NEIGHBORHOOD, HAS NOW BECOME A GHETTO.
FACED WITH POVERTY, CRIME, DRUG ABUSE, IGNORANCE AND DISEASE, OUR COURSE OF ACTION IS OBVIOUS ···
WE MUST MOVE OUR CHURCH TO THE SUBURBS!
AMEN!
AMEN!
Joel

Speaking out

Mennonite food?

Belief, not cuisine, drew me back to Mennonites.

Brad Kunkel

Every Thanksgiving my entire family, which includes myself, my brother and sister, my parents, and all in-laws and grandkids attached thereto, crams into a cabin in the mountains for four days of feasting and celebrating God's gifts. Principal among them is the mere fact that we are yet a family able to survive under such circumstances and even enjoy ourselves. Immensely.

One of the highlights of our little focus on the family is sharing the photographs we took during the past year. Last year, as per usual, I forgot mine. But Dad didn't. Dad never does. He treated us to photos of the cross-country motor home tour. I must say, my father's photographic acumen had certainly not suffered with retirement. We witnessed a 35 mm survey of Americana worthy of PBS.

During the "U.S.A. from the couch" tour, the one photo that really got my attention was of a restaurant somewhere in the Midwest proclaiming its intention to serve "Mennonite food."

Now what, I found myself asking, might "Mennonite food" be? My first thought was that it must be either African or Indian cuisine. It makes sense that "Mennonite food" would be the fare eaten by the greatest number of Mennonites in the world, right?

But then I thought about what really justifies something having the description of "Mennonite" attached to it. The way I understand it, it has something to do with believing the Bible to be the verbally inspired, infallible Word of God. And believing in the importance of repenting and being baptized for the forgiveness of sins. And believing in a commitment to the body of Christ as God ordained it to be embodied in the local congregation.

Mennonite food? I must be missing something. Surely the significance of this revelation has been severely understated. The mind reels. Mine immediately wandered to some of the more maligned elements of our diet we read about in the Scriptures. I thought, "Could it be their time has finally come to be redeemed?"

Pearl Sensenig (MCC)

Diet or dogma? *Mennonites serve food at a relief sale.*

Raised bread: I speak, of course, of the infamous ingredient, yeast. When I returned from vacation I found a cookbook on my shelf telling me how to prepare "Mennonite food." (Is this anything like baptism class?) Anyway, I noted that many recipes had to do with raised bread or related culinary delights. I thought, Has yeast finally "risen" above its biblical position as a metaphor for sin and evil in this world? Can it truly be saved? Can it be "Mennonite food"? Can it believe?

Well, OK, maybe I'm teetering on the edge of cynicism here. Or maybe I went hurling over it three paragraphs ago. In any event, let me apologize to all of the makers out there of cottage-cheese-inside-dough-with-a-name-that-starts-with-"V"-but-I-don't-know-what-it-is-because-all-the-cookbooks-spell-it-differently. (I really do love that stuff, by the way.)

The problem stems from my own spiritual pilgrimage. You see, I grew up in a Mennonite church and Mennonite family and went to a Mennonite college. But I will admit to you now that my journey took me away from the faith I professed as a youth. When others at our little denominational college in Kansas were out playing during mid-term breaks, I was in my dorm room reading *The Passover Plot* and other anti-Christian literature. I was trying desperately to justify my rejection of a system of beliefs that I saw as getting in the way of what I wanted to do and be.

When I returned to my faith and to my church, it was because I could not help but agree with what we as a denomination *believed*. I could not be true to myself and my own intellect without acknowledging the veracity of what really defined the Mennonite people: What they *believe*. Our own church here in San Jose has many members who have been baptized into a faith, not a cuisine. I think, I hope, they wouldn't understand the concept of "Mennonite food." And they shouldn't.

I hope you realize I don't denigrate the importance of history and tradition. I'm looking at a book right now called *Martyrs' Mirror*—a very thick volume devoted to Mennonites who lived and died for their faith, not for what they preferred to eat. And I praise God for the saints of the church from whom we can continue to learn—about what they know of their relationship to God, not whether they prefer their gravy with raisins.

Next time someone asks you what makes you a Mennonite, I suggest a recitation of the beliefs that make us a people of God. Not the recipe for V-whatever.

Brad Kunkel, a member of the Lincoln Glen Mennonite Brethren Church in San Jose, Calif., works as a contractor and builder. This article is reprinted from The Christian Leader.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Learning to pray

• • • ▾

Two windows and a solitary place

Julian of Norwich teaches us about holistic prayer.

Marlene Kropf

When I visited England for the first time, the place I most wanted to see was Julian's cell in Norwich. More than Buckingham Palace or the Yorkshire moors or Shakespeare's burial spot in Holy Trinity Church, the place I longed to see was a tiny cell that had been the home of a 14th-century mystic, Julian of Norwich.

How we found her cell is another story. My husband, Stanley, and I arrived in Norwich late one afternoon without directions to the cell. A tiny Anglican sister in traditional black and white garb saw our bewilderment and immediately offered to guide us to the cell. We followed her through twisting streets and arrived at the church with only 20 minutes left before closing. When the sister discovered the vicar was still at prayer in the cell, she shooed him out and told us to enter. There we sat and prayed in this place hallowed by centuries of pilgrims at prayer.

Julian had been a spiritual mother to me ever since I discovered her writing years before as a young adult. Her book, *Revelations of Divine Love* (sometimes called *Showings*), written in the 1370s, is the first work of an English woman writer that survives today. Of her accomplishments Thomas Merton wrote, "There can be no doubt that Lady Julian is the greatest of the English mystics. Not only that, but she is one of the greatest English theologians."

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Julian was an anchoress, a woman who devoted her life to prayer. For several decades she lived in solitude in a 10-foot by 10-foot cell attached to St. Julian's Church in Norwich. Her book tells the story of a series of visions she received of the crucified Christ and her reflections on the meaning of those visions.

Black Plague: Perhaps I found Julian so compelling because her faith was forged in a tumultuous time. During her century England and France were fighting the Hundred Years War, famine and a peasants' revolt disrupted civil life, three outbreaks of the Black Plague reduced the population of England by one-half during her lifetime.

> ***It is not enough to pray. It is not enough to be a faithful churchgoer. Nor is it enough to do acts of mercy and justice in the world. All three are necessary for a healthy spiritual life.***

Julian was no stranger to suffering. Yet the vision she received of the breadth and depth of God's love produced a vigorous faith. From her tiny cell she wrote,

"In God is endless friendship, space, life and being."

And the words she heard Jesus speak to her from the cross still inspire many today:

"Yes, all shall be well,
and all will be well,
and thou shalt see thyself
that all manner of thing shall be well."

We sing her words in the hymn "Mothering God, you gave me birth" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, #482).

Since visiting Julian's place of prayer (and returning several years later for a longer visit), I have come to view her cell as a symbol or model for a healthy, balanced spiritual life. At the center of Julian's life was a solitary place where she waited in quiet, met God, and interceded for others. But her cell also had two windows: one opened into the church, where she heard the Word of God daily and participated in Communion. The other window opened out onto a busy street in Norwich. To that window it is believed that people came to talk to Julian for several hours each day and received spiritual counsel.

Even though she lived in solitude, Julian lived in communion with God, in communion with her community of faith and in communion with the world around her. Through one window Julian received the living Word, and through the other she shared the living Word with needy souls. In between was a quiet, fertile place in which the Word took root, flourished and bore fruit.

At the end of the 20th century, Julian's three-dimensional spirituality still offers a sturdy model for those who seek to be whole. It is not enough to pray. It is not enough to be a faithful churchgoer. Nor is it enough to do acts of mercy and justice in the world. All three are necessary for a healthy spiritual life. What God calls us to is daily, intimate friendship with the divine that unites us with all who love God and strengthens us to do the work of love in the world.

If you want to learn more about this remarkable woman and her life of prayer, you may want to read the following:

Showings by Julian of Norwich (Classics of Western Spirituality Series), Paulist Press, 1978,

Praying with Julian by Gloria Durka, St. Mary's Press, 1989,

Julian of Norwich: Mystic and Theologian by Grace M. Jantzen, Paulist Press, 1988.

Fiscal health

How to grant a loan and keep a relationship

Credit and relationships can be a volatile mixture.

J.B. Miller

Do you cringe when a relative or friend asks you for a loan? Do you wonder if saying yes to the request will strengthen the relationship, or if saying no may end it? Lending money to family members and friends often creates tensions and strains, sometimes to the point that relationships are severed.

Statistics help us see why relationships are strained. In a survey conducted by *The New York Times* earlier this year, 31 percent of respondents said they had loaned $500 or more to a friend or relative and had not been repaid. It shouldn't be a surprise that not getting repaid on a promise to pay causes problems.

If a friend or relative asks you for a loan, it is helpful to ask two questions: (1) What am I willing to do in order to collect if repayment does not occur? and (2) Am I willing to lose the money? In other words, am I willing to walk away when repayment doesn't occur, or will I take enforcement action such as turning the matter over to a collection agency, possibly affecting the borrower's credit standing?

Lending to friends and relatives is risky. Experience tells me that more relationships are harmed by these activities than are strengthened. Part of this may be due to the fact that people often make loans outside of good business practices. They give money with no written promise to repay or statement of the loan terms. So when repayment doesn't happen at the speed the lender expects, relationships suffer.

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

Sometimes the borrower doesn't repay because he or she figures the lenders are wealthy enough they won't miss it anyway: "They have so much money. Why should I have to repay them?" Some parents write these experiences off when a child doesn't repay a loan and assume it's part of the child's inheritance. But children should not assume this. Some parents harbor feelings of bitterness toward children who have not repaid loans, but they keep quiet for the sake of family harmony.

As Christians, we want to help our sisters and brothers in need, but extending them credit may not be the best way to help them. We need to consider the impact of relationships when lending money to a friend or relative.

> ***As Christians, we want to help our sisters and brothers in need, but extending them credit may not be the best way to help them.***

Repayment schedules: Some people fall into the trap of making loans to people who really shouldn't be borrowing more money. They are already financially strapped and borrowing more money will only increase the pressure. Many times these people need to see a credit counselor to help them set up repayment schedules for their existing loans. If people already have problems meeting their existing obligations, giving them more money usually does not solve any problems.

While most of these comments are focused on the lender, the potential borrower needs to consider carefully the ramifications before a friend or relative is approached about lending money. Many people who borrow from friends or relatives find relationships strained because the lender may feel that he or she has a right to inquire at various times when repayment is going to be made. Sometimes this opens the door to other even more intrusive personal questions.

Is there a good way to manage credit between relatives or friends? Much depends on the relationships involved, but here are some general guidelines that may help you avoid problems:

1. Put it in writing. Obtain a promissory note with the interest rate, loan amount and repayment schedule stated. This will reduce the chance of unrealistic expectations. I once asked a relative to sign a promissory note for $100. It helped teach him responsibility and clearly stated my expectation that he repay me.

2. Know what your plan of action will or will not be. Ask the question, "What will I do if the borrower doesn't live up to his or her repayment commitment?"

3. Keep it private. Don't discuss the transaction with anyone else unless you have the permission of all parties.

4. If you are the borrower and are unable to pay when repayment is due, communicate with the lender. Ignoring your inability to repay will only increase resentment and misunderstanding

5. Think twice if the proposed borrower is known to have a history of not repaying loans. You may not be doing the person a favor by lending more money. A more helpful activity may be to assist the proposed borrower with a credit counselor—even if he or she may not think so.

6. Learn to say no. When promises to pay money back have not been met, giving that person more money will generally not assist in learning responsibility.

7. Be generous. If a person is in a financial crisis and needs money to put food on the table, extend a gift, not a loan.

Sweat equity
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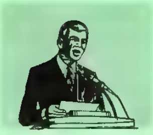

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THE Mennonite

Mennonite Men

NOVEMBER 14, 1995

Peace comes to Aurora

Meg Rouse is a member of Peace Mennonite Church, Aurora, Colo. She writes, "I was born in Norristown, Pa. My parents both came from strong African-American Christian backgrounds. It was through my cousin that I became acquainted with the Mennonite church. I was baptized in 1976 and became a member of Bethel Mennonite Church in Norristown. I was impressed then and still marvel at the community spirit among Mennonites.

"In 1982 I arrived in Denver. I began a 13-year journey of visiting and residing in various denominations. Last year, 1994, I came back 'home.' I had seen the sign for Peace Mennonite Community Church every time I drove down Alameda Avenue. The sign is located on the site where the church plans to build its facility. Finally, I called the church office to find out the location and time of services. Again, I marveled at the warmth and friendliness of the people. Pastor Len Wiebe visited my home the very next day.

"I became a member of Peace Mennonite Church in December 1994. I have grown spiritually and emotionally, and have been able to participate in the teaching ministry and worship leadership. I believe that through the laying on of hands by the pastor, elders and other faithful members of Peace Mennonite, I have been healed of a terminal heart condition. It pleased God to work this miracle in my life to strengthen my faith and the faith of my brothers and sisters in Christ. I have also felt led to go into the ministry. In November, I am starting the Pastoral Studies Distance Education Program through Conrad Grebel College (Waterloo, Ont.). I am a Mennonite Christian both denominationally and in my heart."

Ron Williams photo

Meg Rouse

"Breakfast in the Rockies" is an annual event for our church.

Other Aurora ministries: Around 90 people each Sunday worship at Peace Mennonite Church. Aurora is an eastern suburb of Denver surrounded by Lowry Air Force Base, Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center and Rocky Mountain Arsenal.

Peace Mennonite now worships in the Aurora Senior Center. In a positive manner, pastor Len Wiebe and the congregation present Christ's good news of peace with God and peace with others. Small groups, meeting weekly in homes, are an important part of church life. Many children and youth attend Sunday school and worship. Wichita '95 was the major youth event this year.

Len and Joan Wiebe began their Aurora ministry in 1986 under the sponsorship of the Western District Conference home mission committee. After making many community contacts, the Wiebes were able to begin worship services in 1987. As intended from the beginning, the congregation is affiliated with both the Western District (GC) and the Rocky Mountain (MC) Mennonite conferences.

Generous friends made possible the purchase of 2.2 acres of ground on busy Alameda Avenue. The congregation plans to begin building a meetinghouse next summer.

Therefore Mennonite Men has selected Peace Mennonite for a Tenth Man grant for 1996. Wiebe writes, "We are very grateful to 'Tenth Man' for its commitment to help us with a $50,000 grant." Mennonite Men invites gifts for this project. They may be mailed to Tenth Man, P.O. Box 61, North Newton, KS 67117.

Peace Mennonite also asks for volunteers next summer and fall to help construct their new facility. Volunteers may write to the Peace Mennonite Community Church, 1602 S. Parker Road, Suite 206, Denver, CO 80231.

— Leonard Wiebe with Heinz Janzen

Sweat Equity

Mennonites have always used labor from members and friends to reduce costs on their meetinghouses. The Tenth Man church building program likewise expects that considerable work be done by those receiving grants. Such labor is called "sweat equity." Friends also help.

When building a new house of worship, members first plan an attractive and functional building and secure a proper site. Funding such a facility also requires careful planning. The church secures a loan and does legal work. Lenders expect a down payment. They want to know if the borrower is able to repay the loan. The borrower wants to know whether loan payments will leave money for worship, pastoral care, Christian teaching and outreach.

Often the Tenth Man church building grant functions as a down payment. Then the congregation can assume a building loan to be repaid out of its monthly income.

Sweat equity reduces borrowing and interest. Donated labor varies with the gifts and training of members. Experienced builders may be able to do most of the work themselves, needing money only for materials. A plumber may install pipes and valves. Experienced builders may supervise beginners. Almost anyone can paint walls inside and outside. Rollers and painting pads make this easier than ever. Paint stores can supply advice, needed tools and equipment.

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Truman Hershberger paints window trim at University Mennonite Church, State College, Pa.

Men at the Crossroads: Beyond Traditional Roles and Modern Options *by Jack Balswick (Intervarsity, 1992, 218 pages). Reviewed by Heinz Janzen*

In the early 1990s, Robert Bly's *Iron John* was on the bestseller list. Now the Promise Keepers movement attracts hundreds of thousands of men.

How shall we make sense of such opposite approaches to men? Jack Balswick of Fuller Theological Seminary traces the interest in male identity since the 1960s. He identifies and critiques a variety of approaches. Then he suggests some positive approaches.

One of his most important quotes is from L. Feldman: "A summary of research on fathering concludes that the traditional emphasis on fathers being good providers and firm disciplinarians has squeezed out the expectation that they nurture their children."

Balswick looks behind the current ideal of the working man and the stay-at-home wife. The separation of the breadwinner from the home is a product of the industrial revolution. The agrarian society of our ancestors had father, mother and children all working together. The separation of men from nurturing their children is one cause of adolescent loss of identity.

Balswick notes that both new and old male roles are blighted by sin. He presents Jesus as the model for Christian men (and women) to follow. Love is the dominant characteristic of our Lord. His is the way of peace. Balswick agrees with Donald Kraybill's words against war.

He has a chapter on male inability to express emotion. Other sections deal with male competition, power and control, sexuality, stages of life and spirituality.

The section, "Men in Relationships" is strong. The book concludes with "Men Made New: Beyond Traditional Roles and Modern Options." Balswick gives a wide-ranging, useful perspective on current views of manhood.

Masculinity and Spirituality

At Wichita '95 around 70 men and a few women turned out for the two seminars on masculinity and spirituality. Resource person was Kurt Horst of Johnstown, Pa.

First he exposed the secular heroes of manhood: the sailor, the gunslinger, the soldier, the boss and the athlete. Most North American men see no need to review the meaning of manhood. They are content to attack feminism and oppress women.

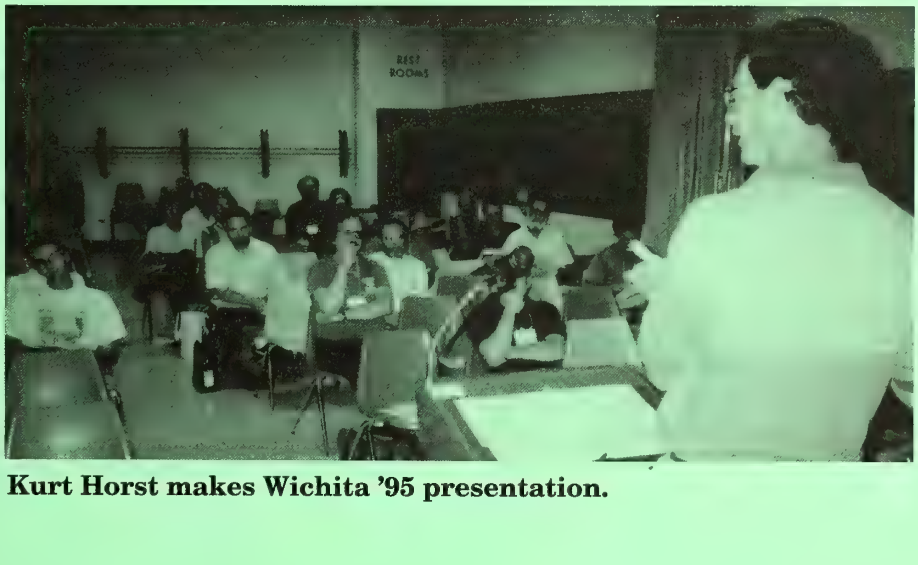
Yet a widespread hunger for spiritual renewal exists among men, leading to various Christian men's movements. Horst went on to current themes in masculine spirituality: men calling one another to be men, getting in touch with emotions, and achieving desirable masculine traits. In Promise Keepers, for instance, men are called to integrity, purity and responsibility.

A Christian-Anabaptist perspective includes:

1. Male and female being complementary and joyful
2. Man's need to leave father and mother to be united to his wife
3. Man's need to end blaming; rather to take responsibility for laziness and abuse. Godly men will serve in the name of Christ.
4. Man's need to wrestle with God in prayer until man submits
5. Men as mentors to younger men
6. Men finding divine healing from past wounds: such as from parents, teachers, military service or employers. Healing frees them from compulsions that harm self or those nearest them.

Horst concluded by saying:

- "Seek first the Kingdom of God."
- No "masculine spirituality" exists. To know and be known of God is the same for women and men.
- Though the goal is the same, men and women start the Christian walk from different places.
- Spirituality grows both in private disciplines and in group life.
- True masculine spirituality is not anti-woman.
- True spirituality does not bless us as we are. Rather it invites us to enter the process of growth in godliness.



Kurt Horst makes Wichita '95 presentation.

Mennonite Men Banquet

Almost 400 men and a few women were registered for the Mennonite Men banquet and business meeting at Wichita '95. Business moved rapidly. Delegates confirmed Harold Voth as president, Kim Claassen as vice-president, and Melvin Pauls as secretary. Voth is a school administrator, Claassen a farmer, and Pauls an accountant. Continuing treasurer Carl Thieszen is a retired educator.

Wichita '95

Outgoing president Burdell Roeschly presented an $18,000 Tenth Man grant to Jeff Long for the Columbia Basin Mennonite Church in Ephrata, Wash. Representatives of the Community of Love Mennonite Church in Philadelphia and Hope Mennonite Church in Wichita gave testimonies of thanks for earlier grants. Dean Linsenmeyer reported on men's prayer groups in the Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

A men's octet from the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., sang, as did the whole group under the leadership of John Gaeddert and pianist Harold Moyer.

Burkina Faso

During the Global Church Celebration at Wichita '95, why did Zachariah Entz, son of Commission on Overseas Mission workers Loren and Donna Entz, sit at a sewing machine in the Africa pavilion? He represented the male tailors of many African villages, making their living by sewing colorful shirts for men or blouses for women. Urban tailors also make suits for men. Urban women sometimes sew part-time to supplement the family income. More often rural women only cultivate field crops and cook.

Almost every African produces some marketable goods for cash income.

Mennonite Men in Mexico

Cuauhtemoc, Mexico, July 1 — An amazing new development has been the monthly Christian businessmen's breakfasts. Abe Rempel, COM worker in Mexico, has been asked to give input at these meetings a number of times. Last Saturday he spoke on business ethics. The idea that a business should be a service to the whole community and not just to make money for the owner is a new idea to many. Now we are thankful for the 13 years of experience Abe has had in the business field.

— *Hanna Rempel*

The September/October 1995 issue of Mennonite Economic Development Associates' *Marketplace* magazine has four major articles on the Mennonite colonies in Mexico. In one, the businessmen's breakfast is mentioned. The Old Colony Mennonites of Mexico are experiencing severe economic and religious crises. However, major help is coming from people within the colonies, Commission on Overseas Mission workers and other agencies.

Heinz Janzen, Editor
Mennonite Men insert in *The Mennonite*
Published annually
P.O. Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

Yes, I would like to help new Mennonite churches!

☐ I want to give $100 when called upon, up to twice a year, to help new Mennonite churches buy or build their first permanent meetinghouse. I understand I will be contacted when my contribution is needed.

☐ Enclosed is my contribution of $____________.

Name ____

Address ____

Phone __________________ Home congregation __________________

Return this form to: Tenth Man, c/o Carl Thieszen, P.O. Box 61, North Newton, KS 67117
or Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Printed in U.S.A.

News

DGS works to put wheels on integration

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—General Conference leaders struggled to put wheels on integration here Oct. 13-14.

Division of General Services (DGS) members grappled with the implications of the July delegate vote in favor of the move toward integration of the Mennonite Church (MC) and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC). DGS is a part of the General Conference.

GC general secretary Vern Preheim said he thought that the recently appointed integration committee could move "fairly soon and rather quickly" on the merger of some programs, such as ministerial leadership services.

However, he noted that the MC General Board response to the process is critical. "On the General Conference side, we have always been more ready and willing to move quickly. Prior to the vote, the MC General Board was more cautious. I'll be interested to see if they have changed their minds, given the vote at Wichita '95," he said.

"People have asked when we will be integrated," said Preheim. "We will be integrated when we have one General Board and one integrated delegate body."

DGS members discovered that working on cooperation prior to the actual merger could, at times, be a bit overwhelming. To start with, they had reservations about a proposed contribution form for integrated congregations in the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference and the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference. The two integrated conferences asked the two denominations to design an integrated form for them to use. (The Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada is developing its own contribution form.)

The two-page form would allow churches to give (1) to the total mission of the two denominations or the where-most-needed category, or (2) to designate their funds to specific MC or GC programs.

Several members found the form too cumbersome. "We have to do things that support integration. This type of form makes me want to give my money elsewhere," said Connie Hart-Yellowman, El Reno, Okla.

Others noted that the problems were

Integration committee named

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/MC)—The newly formed integration committee for the Mennonite Church (MC) and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) will hold its first meeting Dec. 2-4 in Chicago.

MC and GC delegates at Wichita '95, the joint convention held this past summer, voted in favor of a recommendation to move toward the integration of the two denominations.

The committee has the difficult mandate of trying to guide and monitor the process of integration. A timetable for integration will be voted on at the separate MC and GC delegate sessions in 1997. The integration committee will bring specific recommendations for approval to the MC and GC General Boards.

Integration committee members were recently appointed by the two general boards.

GC representatives are Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Bluffton, Ohio; Ted Rempel, Edmonton, Alta.; Donald Steelberg, Wichita, Kan., and Ruth Suter, San Francisco.

MC representatives are Mary Burkholder, Kitchener, Ont.; Dwight McFadden Jr., Akron, Pa.; John C. Murray, Topeka, Ind., and Lee F. Snyder, Harrisonburg, Va.

The following staff will also participate in the meetings: Vern Preheim, GC general secretary; Miriam Book, MC acting general secretary, and Helmut Harder, Conference of Mennonites in Canada general secretary.

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MCC routes Somalia funds to Sudan / p. 14

Commentary: Haiti's hopeful but uncertain future / p. 15

Loan program helps Winnipeg women entrepreneurs / p. 16

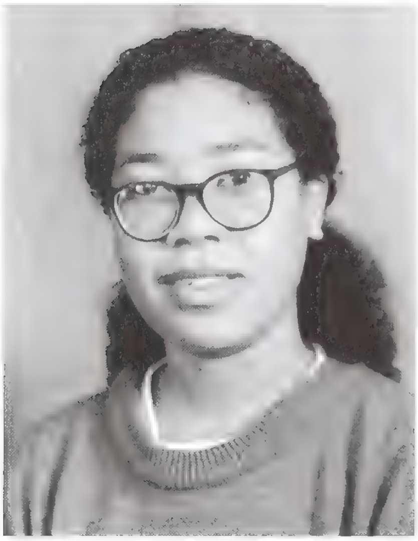
India native ministers to Native Americans / p. 16

COE eager to work at integration / p. 17

Mennonite Central Committee is exploring the possibility of beginning work in Burma. An assessment team recently traveled to the Asian country to study the situation. Christians make up only about 5 percent of Burma's population and are mostly from ethnic minority groups. Burma's military government, primarily Burmese and Buddhist, is trying to create a homogeneous society, believing this will sustain national unity and boost Burma's economy, now one of the world's poorest. Some ethnic groups have been at war with the government for the past 40 years.

• • •

Port Rowan (Ont.) Mennonite Brethren Church and Erie View United Mennonite Church, also in Port Rowan, worshiped together Oct. 10 for the first time in more than 55 years. The congregations met under one roof in the 1920s, when Mennonites first settled in Port Rowan, worshiping together but maintaining separate membership rolls. In 1940 the two congregations parted, with the United Mennonite congregation moving one kilometer south to a former Baptist meetinghouse. The congregations came back together to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Mennonite Central Committee.



Azevedo

Three Mennonite groups are beginning joint work in Macau. The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Eastern Mennonite Missions and the Taiwan Mennonite Church are sending Izelma de Azevedo to Macau. Azevedo, from Jaboatao, Brazil, departs for Hong Kong this month. Her Portuguese will be useful in Macau, a former Portuguese colony off the coast of China.

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"Money interrupts our communication with one another," Robert Lynn Wood told a stewardship conference at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary Sept. 29-30. "We have sermons that dance around it, and we use euphemisms [for money] rather than deal with it directly," he said. One of the current difficulties in talking about stewardship, he said, is "the problem of fatigue to a law-centered approach to giving. We use words like 'duty, obligation, law of proportionate giving, and must.' ... The churches are missing that the center of money is grace."

related to the fact that the two denominations do not have parallel structures.

Some expressed concern that according to the prorated dollar amounts on the form, the Mennonite Church would receive 62 percent of the giving, while the General Conference would only receive 38 percent.

DGS asked that the form be tested in the integrated conferences and that the newly formed integration committee work to address the institutional differences.

Magazine merger: A discussion about the possible merger of *The Mennonite* and the *Gospel Herald* led to a similar conclusion. The *Gospel Herald* is under the jurisdiction of the Mennonite Publication Board, while *The Mennonite* is governed by DGS.

Members questioned whether DGS has the authority to negotiate the terms of a new MC/GC magazine when the entities that publish the *Gospel Herald* and *The Mennonite* are so different from each other—the former is owned by the publishing company of the Mennonite Church; the latter is owned by a denomination.

DGS passed a motion to ask the GC General Board to relay the following recommendation to the integration committee: DGS suggests that the integration committee appoint an advisory committee to look at the mission of the *Gospel Herald*, *The Mennonite* and *Christian Living*, conduct readership research of all three magazines, and explore development of a new magazine, including both journalistic and business perspectives.

Giving down: In other discussion, Ted Stuckey, GC business manager and treasurer, reported that giving is down $80,000 this year compared with last year at the same time. "We need to look seriously at our budget. We can't assume business as usual," he said.

Allen Yoder Jr., Middlebury, Ind., urged immediate action: "We're going to have to start cutting services and maybe if we cut services, it might strike a chord in the constituency. ... I hope we're not thinking integration is our salvation. We need to cut now rather than wait and end up in the red."

Dave Linscheid, GC communications director, said, "We need something brand new. What can we latch on to that completely turns everything around and still reflects GC mission?" *Carla Reimer*

MCC reroutes donations for Somalia to Sudan

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—With an abundance of designated gifts for Somalia and overwhelming needs in Sudan, Mennonite Central Committee's executive committee rerouted funds from Somalia to Sudan at meetings Sept. 22-23.

The committee approved a recommendation to take $100,000 U.S/ $135,000 Cdn. contributed for MCC Somalia programs and redesignate the money for relief work in southern Sudan. MCC plans to give additional funds to Eastern Mennonite Missions and to Lutheran World Relief for clean water and other programs in Somalia.

In 1992-1993, when war and famine in Somalia caught the attention of the media, MCC did not appeal for contributions for Somalia. However, the agency received more than $650,000 U.S./ $878,000 Cdn. designated for Somalia. Currently some $370,000 U.S. /$500,000 Cdn. remains unspent. MCC's projected budget for Somalia for each of the next two years is around $100,000 U.S./ $135,000 Cdn.

"It does not honor the donors' intent to hold funds designated for Somalia unused for more than five years," said Berry Friesen, director of administration and resources.

"The original intention was to relieve suffering and war at that time in Somalia. Is it problematic to use the money in another place where the situation is the same?" asked Jeanette Flaming, executive committee member from Washington. Civil war in Sudan is causing widespread hunger.

In Somalia MCC supports local peacemaking efforts that "help elders learn to speak with their neighbors again," reported Eric Olfert, MCC Africa co-secretary. Olfert said that MCC continues to look for ways to implement agricultural extension and teacher training programs in Somalia.

"Unfortunately, grass-roots peace efforts in Somalia are so localized that moving from one clan-controlled area to another is like constantly crossing international borders," said Olfert.

"Difficulties like this hinder our efforts to do geographically broad programs, and to work within the boundaries of one or several clans could cause us to be seen as taking sides and limit our effectiveness at peacemaking," he said.

Phil Rich, acting executive committee chair from Archbold, Ohio, agreed that "MCC is committed to continued work in Somalia, and as opportunity arises we will commit additional funds."

Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker, MCC communications secretary, noted the outpouring of money for Somalia shows the power of the media to move people. At the same time Somalia was in the headlines, MCC had launched a fund appeal for seeds and tools for Sudan. After staff worked to alert the constituency about the needs in Sudan, $355,000 U.S./ $480,000 Cdn. was received. MCC staff did not appeal for funds for Somalia, yet MCC received nearly twice that amount.

COMMENTARY

A hopeful Haiti faces challenges

J. Denny Weaver, professor of religion at Bluffton (Ohio) College, first visited Haiti with Christian Peacemaker Teams in December 1992. The country then was governed by army leaders who had ousted Haiti's president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Weaver returned to Haiti in September, a little more than a year after a U.S. invasion restored Aristide to power.

Optimism is cautiously coming to life in Haiti. But increasing challenges will face the country in the coming months.

Clear progress has come in the past year. The old army has been disbanded, and people are optimistic about the more highly educated and better trained police force replacing it. The level of overt violence is declining. Some corrupt local judges have been replaced, with more changes to come.

People I met said that for the first time in memory aid from the government actually reached their village, a direct result of President Aristide's putting foreign aid into the places that help needy people rather than into his own pockets. The people are excited about participating in the electoral process and look forward to the coming presidential elections. Although Aristide cannot be re-elected, Haitians believe he will indicate a successor who will continue reforms.

But despite the Haitians' optimism, our conversations also contained signs of concern in three areas. Developments in the next six to nine months will likely show whether optimism is warranted.

Challenges: One issue concerns the coming presidential elections. Haitians believe that the United States will attempt to influence those elections. In spite of official denials, elements in the United States have engaged in many efforts to undermine Aristide. Such efforts include support for his opponents and their elitist parties, as well as pressure from Strobe Talbott, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, to influence membership and decisions of the Haitian Provisional Electoral Council.

In a particularly flagrant case of intervention, reported in *The Nation* Oct. 9, U.S. embassy officials secretly sprang Marcel Morissaint from prison. Morissaint was a highly placed coup supporter who had admitted both his participation in three high-profile political assassinations and his longtime place on the CIA payroll. He was likely spirited away to prevent further revelations of U.S. involvement with coup leaders.

Prayer is faith that God can rescue Haiti.

Another reason to temper optimism arrives in February 1996, when the United Nations peacekeeping and observer forces leave Haiti. Many people believe that the U.S. invasion force was intentionally lax in disarming the Haitian army. A U.S. Army source who requested anonymity told us that an estimated 180,000 guns remain unconfiscated.

Probably the most serious situation of all concerns economics. World economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are putting enormous pressure on Haiti to "privatize," that is, to transfer government industry to private ownership. Aid will be withheld unless the Haitian senate approves privatization.

In the case of Haiti, privatization could have catastrophic results. Since the mass of the population has no money to tax, privatization would eliminate the only real source of government revenue. Further, placing

A Chicago Mennonite won $45 million in the Illinois lottery ($31,050,000 after taxes). Art Britton of Grace Mennonite Church, Chicago, won the largest single prize ever in Illinois.

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A walk from Nazareth to Jerusalem March 22-31, 1996, will benefit the Nazareth Christian Hospital in Israel. For information call the Nazareth Project, Inc., at (717) 392-4365.

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MCC overseas offices have been asked to cut their budgets for 1996 by 3 percent. Contributions from churches and individuals have been steady. The budget shortfall stems primarily from a $565,000 Cdn./ $412,500 U.S. cut in funds from the Canadian government.

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Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries of the Mennonite Church is raising funds to translate *Jubilee* Sunday school curriculum into Spanish.

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After more than a year of short food supplies due to drought, farm families in northwestern Honduras were hit with floods this past July, August and September. Daryl Yoder-Bontrager, Mennonite Central Committee Honduras representative, notes that mid-sized disasters such as this often hit people the hardest. Larger disasters attract many agencies ready to respond and smaller emergencies can usually be covered locally. Mid-sized disasters can be beyond the reach of local resources yet don't bring in outside relief. MCC will cooperate with the Honduran Mennonite Church to assist about one-tenth of the 5,000 farm families who have lost their harvests. MCC will provide $69,000 Cdn./$51,000 U.S. for purchase of food, seeds and medicines, which the Honduran Mennonite Church will distribute.

MCC

Above are children in a Russian Mennonite Central Committee feeding center in the early 1920s. MCC supporters in Russia celebrated MCC's 75th anniversary at Chortitza House of Culture, formerly the Chortitza Mennonite Church, founded as Russia's first Mennonite congregation in 1789. Chortitza was the location of one of the first MCC-sponsored soup kitchens that saved thousands of lives. North American Mennonites formed MCC specifically to respond to famine in Russia caused by war—first World War I, then civil war following the collapse of Russian czarist rule. The Sept. 27 celebration was the first Christian service in the building since the mid-1930s, when Soviet authorities expropriated it. Some participants had worshiped in the church as children.

industry in private hands would put additional power in the hands of the elite, who have controlled Haiti in a corrupt fashion for so long.

The next six to nine months are important to the future of Haiti. Concerned Christians can do two things. One is to pray. It sometimes seems that only a miracle can save the people of Haiti. But it is also true that prayer is faith that God can rescue Haiti. Second, concerned Christians should give visible testimony to that faith by encouraging the U.S. government to change its policy toward Haiti. Support the efforts of Christian Peacemaker Teams and other organizations concerned about Haiti. Contact members of Congress and of the administration of President Clinton. Urge them to abandon the policy of privatization, and to cease all efforts to undermine the reforms of President Aristide. Concerned people can help a miracle happen.

Job creation project helps Winnipeg women

Winnipeg (MCCC)— A job creation concept from the developing world is helping Winnipeg women start their own businesses.

Called A Credit Circle, the program provides loans to women who lack collateral or a credit history. It is based on a model developed in Bangladesh.

According to Garry Loewen, who directs job creation efforts for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Manitoba, access to credit is one of the main hurdles facing women in small-scale, home-based businesses.

To help women get loans, SEED Winnipeg Ltd. and Women's World Finance Manitoba Association have introduced an 18-month pilot project with the support of a $35,000 grant from United Way.

SEED Winnipeg is supported by MCC Manitoba.

Each circle consists of four to seven women. Circle members assess and approve each other's loans before submitting them to a management board for final approval. First-time loans cannot exceed $1,000, while additional loans are issued only when all members are current with their loan payments. The largest loan available is $10,000. The Credit Circle meets on a monthly basis to provide support.

Each Credit Circle operates autonomously, selecting its own members, appointing a Circle coordinator and developing bylaws. The program is currently open only to women but will eventually be expanded to include men.

"This is an example of the First World learning from the Third World," says Loewen.

Lynn Eisner, owner of a fledgling home-based business started in the spring of 1994, was one of the first to apply to join the Winnipeg Credit Circle. Eisner quit her job as a day-care director and spent her savings to establish her business, Caslee Enterprises, which makes fabric-covered gift boxes and fabric bags for wine bottles. She says she needs a loan to help her develop new markets outside the province.

But "money is only part of the concept," Eisner says, adding she is looking forward to the interaction with and support from her group. "This gives us a chance to build up our self-confidence. We feel we won't fail because we are holding one another up."

The first Winnipeg Credit Circle is expected to be established before the end of the year. *Gladys Terichow*

Native of India ministers to Native Americans

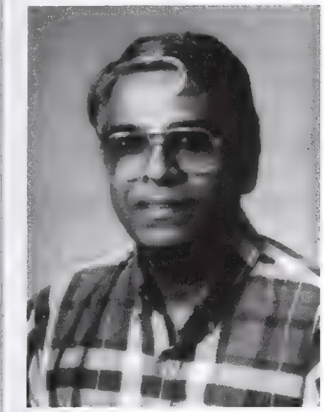
Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—When Thinagar Sitther graduated from his pastoral ministries program, he hoped to work among a sizable population from his native India. In a city like Philadelphia, perhaps. Or maybe the Fiji Islands.

But God had other ideas. When Sitther left Hesston (Kan.) College this past spring, he was invited to be an interim pastor at a small, Native congregation in Hammon, Okla.

Even though Sitther saw there were few active members at the Bethel Mennonite Church when he visited in June, he accepted the call to be the pastor as of Sept. 1.

"I thought serving at the church would be a challenge. It would be a good place to build something," he says, noting that he and his wife, Petty, view their work at Bethel Mennonite Church as a mission; they have only requested enough money to cover their living expenses.

At the first worship service Sitther led there were four other people in attendance. Now, he reports, an average of about 18 attend. The church has also started a children's Sunday school class.


Sitther

For 25 years Sitther had a successful career with the Indian government. Yet all along he had felt that God wanted him to enter the ministry.

"I used the excuse that I didn't have any training. I thought it was enough for me to be involved at my local church," he says.

But when the government told him in summer 1992 to relocate away from Madras, India, Sitther says, it was the "final straw."

He shared his feelings about the transfer with his pastor. The pastor responded, "Maybe God is calling you." "I knew I could no longer postpone my call to the ministry," says Sitther. His wife also decided to leave her job as a schoolteacher.

Petty's younger brother, who works at Hesston College, wrote them about the school's two-year pastoral ministries program. By fall 1993 they had arrived in Hesston, which Sitther considers "nothing short of a miracle."

Sitther has found that his culture and Native American culture have common values, particularly in their approach to the extended family. Sitther says that in Hammon, the sons of an elderly man refused to take their father to a clinic or nursing home when he became sick. Instead, they took care of him at home.

While pastoring Bethel Mennonite Church can sometimes be "discouraging," Sitther says his faith has been strengthened as a result. "I have come to realize that it is God that is going to support my ministry here. If anything happens, it is God's will. It won't be because of me." *Carla Reimer*

COE eager to move on integration

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The Commission on Education discussed integration and a new donation policy at meetings Sept. 28-Oct.1. COE is a program of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

This past summer, Wichita '95 delegates voted in favor of a recommendation to move toward the integration of the Mennonite Church (MC) and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC).

"COE is not interested in sitting on its hands during the integration process. The commission and staff want to be proactive by building on our strengths," said Norma J. Johnson, COE executive secretary and Faith & Life Press publisher.

She noted that COE expressed concern that if GC and MC mission structures were the first to be merged in the integration process, it might set a precedent for the merger of other structures.

Budget crunch: The commission also was concerned about an expected shortfall in dollars to COE, due in part to a new donation policy adopted by the General Board this past March. Undesignated gifts are now distributed according to budget proration rather than to where most needed.

COE approved a GC Youth Ministry Council recommendation, which states that the General Conference will not be a co-sponsor of the 1997 youth convention that is being planned by the Mennonite Church. Instead the council will encourage the planning of regional projects for GC youth during the time period of 1996-1998. The General Conference and the Mennonite Church will co-sponsor a youth convention in 1999.

In a report to the commission, chair Jeff Wright, Upland, Calif., said, "COE is, at its heart, a missionary agency. ... Without a clear call to the church regarding discipleship and disciple making, the global and North American expansion of the church stops in one generation."

He encouraged COE to be intentional in crossing barriers: "Risk, courage, tolerance and entrepreneurship must become the themes that characterize our work."

Garrison Keillor is against repentance. "Sinners are the ones who get the work done," the radio show host is quoted in *Christian Century*. "A strong sense of personal guilt is what makes people willing to serve on committees." (*Salt of the Earth*)

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***America* quotes Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D—N.Y.) on aid to children: "It is beyond belief ... that in the middle of the Great Depression in the 1930s we provided for children a minimum benefit to keep them alive, and in the middle of [the] successful 1990s, with a $7 trillion economy, we're going to take that away." (*Salt of the Earth*)**

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Mennonite Central Committee will donate $12,000 U.S./$16,000 Cdn. to a Mexican relief organization to help supply groceries to families affected by hurricanes Opal and Roxanne. The hurricanes took three swipes through the Mexican state of Tobasco in early October. Thousands of rural residents have abandoned flooded homes and moved to higher ground. Ed Stamm Miller of MCC calls the aid a "first step" and says more aid may follow.

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Fidel Fernandez Jr. updated the Bluffton (Ohio) College community on the work of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee. FLOC was founded in 1967 by Baldemar Velasquez, a young farm worker who graduated from Bluffton in 1969. FLOC has since negotiated agreements with Campbell Soup Company, Vlasic, Heinz USA and Dean Foods. FLOC was involved in bringing Social Security, worker's compensation, unemployment insurance and minimum wages to migrant farm workers in Ohio and parts of Michigan.

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

"All glory, laud and honor" is included in many hymnals, the common text being the 1851 translation by John M. Neale. But most hymnals drop a verse of the Neale translation, according to the August issue of *Christianity and the Arts*. The verse: "A Lord, be thou the rider / And we the little ass, / That to God's holy City / Together we may pass." (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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A November 1993 Harris Poll showed that a majority of Americans believe 20 percent of U.S. federal spending goes to foreign aid, reports *Connections*. In reality, less than 1 percent of the budget is allocated for humanitarian and economic foreign aid. (*Salt of the Earth*)

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The McDonalds golden arches and the shell of Shell Oil Company are better known symbols than the Christian cross, according to a survey of 7,000 people in six countries. The best-known image was the Olympic rings, correctly identified by 92 percent of those surveyed. Eighty-eight percent correctly identified the shell and the arches, but only 54 percent identified the cross. The survey was conducted by Sponsorship Research International, a sports marketing firm based in London. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

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Cynicism toward government and church leaders is greater among the general public than among media workers, according to a poll by the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press. The poll found that more than half of national journalists and one-third of local media workers believe that Washington politicians are honest and ethical, compared with just 18 percent of the general public. Religious leaders were described as highly ethical by three-fourths of the national press, compared with 55 percent of the public. (*The Christian Leader*)

DEATHS

Willard K. Claassen, Faith Church, Newton, Kan., died Oct. 10 at age 84. He served as pastor in Pennsylvania, and at Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., and was executive secretary of the General Conference (GC) Board of Education and Publication 1952-1968. He served on the GC Doctrine and Conduct Committee 1941-1950, and on the Mennonite Biblical Seminary board 1950-1968.

Nickolai Friesen died Sept. 28 at age 94. Shortly after immigrating to Canada from Russia in 1924 he pastored Hoffnungsfelder Church, Mayfair, Sask., then went on to serve as pastor at United Mennonite Church in Black Creek, B.C., and Bethel Church, Aldergrove, B.C. From 1947 to 1955 he also served as evangelist for the British Columbia churches.

MINISTERS

Ken Ashman, Servant Community Church, Arroyo Grande, Calif., is also director of the victim-offender reconciliation program for San Luis Obispo County.

Shang-Yuan Chen was licensed for ministry at Cupertino (Calif.) Church July 16.

Frank James was licensed for ministry at Upper Room Church, Salina Springs, Ariz., June 18.

Fred Klitzke, Intertribal Mennonite Fellowship, Phoenix, was ordained Aug. 4.

Eugene Thieszen, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., was ordained Oct. 1. He is a Commission on Overseas Mission/Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission worker in Botswana.

WORKERS

Lisa Maria Bueckert, South Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church, began a two-year MCC term in December 1994 in Calgary as a material resource coordinator.

Amanda and **Ray Dick**, Hebron Church, Buhler, Kan., are beginning four-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., with Self-Help Crafts, Amanda as an order processor and Ray as a maintenance worker.

Anne and **Harold Fast**, Grace Church, Winkler, Man., are beginning two-year MCC terms in Akron, Pa., Anne as a hostess and Harold as a general assistant and host.

Doug and **Nancy Graber**, Salem-Zion Church, Freeman, S.D., are beginning three-year MCC terms in Highgate, Jamaica.

Dale Hildebrand and **Marlene Sagada,** Warden Woods Church, Scarborough, Ont., are beginning one-year MCC terms in the Philippines as country co-representatives.

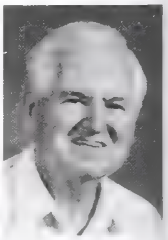
Kathy Hildebrand, Bergthaler Church, Morden, Man., is serving with

Bueckert

A. Dick

R. Dick

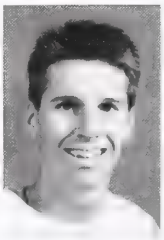
A. Fast


H. Fast

D. Graber

N. Graber

T. Hildebrand


Janzen

Steinmann

MCC Canada's Serving and Learning Together program in Waterloo, Ont.

Tracy Hildebrand, Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, began a one-year term with Eastern Mennonite Missions as a church planter in Bronx, N.Y.

Chris Janzen and **Rosie Steinmann**, Mennonite Fellowship of Rosthern (Sask.) and Hillcrest Church, New Hamburg, Ont., are beginning one-year MCC terms in Al'Quossia, Egypt, teaching English as a second language in primary schools.

John Liechty, Eighth Street Church, Goshen, Ind., has been named vice president of life insurance products for Mennonite Mutual Aid.

Charlotte Martens, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, and Hoffnungsfelder Church, Glenbush, Sask., began a two-year MCC term in May in Winnipeg as a children's programming worker with Andrew's Street Family Centre.

Donald and **Kathryn Penner**, First Church, Newton, Kan., are beginning four-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., with Self-Help Crafts, Donald as a packing clerk and Kathryn as an order processor.

Abe and **Anne Peters**, Fort Garry Church, Winnipeg, are beginning two-year MCC terms in Cuauhtemoc, Mexico, as community workers.

Marcene and **RaGene Ratzlaff**, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., are beginning four-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., with Self-Help Crafts, Marcene as an order processor and RaGene as a repairs foreman.

Arthur and **Helen Rempel**, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, are beginning four-month MCC terms in Akron, Pa., Arthur as a packer and Helen as a server at the Nav Jiwan International Tea Room.

Winifred Saner is cashier and secretary in the finance department at Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind. She previously served as treasurer for Northern District Conference.

Anthony Siemens, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, is beginning a two-year MCC term in Akron, Pa., as a darkroom and audiovisual assistant.

Mark W. Sturtevant, Harlan (Ky.) Fellowship, is beginning a three-year MCC term in Olongapo, Philippines, in community development.

Sharon Thiessen, St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, is beginning a two-year MCC term in New Hamburg, Ont., as an assistant store manager for Self-Help Crafts.

Liechty

Martens

D. Penner

K. Penner

M. Ratzlaff

R. Ratzlaff

A. Rempel

H. Rempel

Siemens

Thiessen

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION for Oct. 1, 1995, of *The Mennonite*, publication no. 259-330, published semimonthly (24 issues annually) at Newton, Kansas, 67114, required by Act of Congress (39 U.S.C. 3685). Annual subscription price $25. Published by General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church of Newton, Kansas, a religious nonprofit organization. Editor, Gordon Houser, of Newton, Kansas. Security holders owning 1 percent or more of total securities, none. (No stock issued.) Known bondholders, etc., none.

Average no. copies each issue printed during preceding 12 months, 8,600; average counter sales, 1; average paid and requested mail subscriptions, 8,340; average total paid and requested circulation, 8,341; average free distribution by mail, 118; average free distribution outside the mail, none; average total free distribution, 118; average total distribution, 8,459; average copies not distributed, 141; average percent paid and requested circulation, 98.4.

Actual no. copies of single issue printed nearest to filing date (Oct. 16, 1995) 8,600; counter sales, 1; paid and requested mail subscriptions, 8,406; total paid and requested circulation, 8,407; free distribution by mail, 80; free distribution outside the mail, 22; total distribution, 8,509; copies not distributed, 91; percent paid and requested circulation, 98.9. Signed, Gordon Houser, Editor

The International Guest House, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, is seeking an **assistant host or hostess** to fill an immediate opening for a one-year voluntary service assignment. Responsibilities include the usual tasks for operating a bed and breakfast facility, but with the added dimension of relating to international guests in a Christian homelike setting. Cross-cultural experience desirable.

Contact **Annabelle Kratz, Board Chair, 13495 Brighton Dam Road, Clarksville, MD 21029; (301) 596-9057.**

Bluffton College announces a full-time, tenure track faculty position as **assistant/associate professor of accounting** beginning fall 1996. CPA and master's degree required; Ph.D., experience in business accounting and teaching preferred. The position involves teaching undergraduate courses in elements of accounting and intermediate accounting, income tax accounting, auditing, and cost accounting. The successful candidate will also develop and teach a course in advanced accounting. Consideration of applications begins Nov. 15 and continues until an appointment is made.

Send letter of interest and resume or vita to **Amy M. Tabler, Assistant to the V.P. and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196**. Equal opportunity employer

Bluffton College announces a tenure-track position as **assistant/associate professor of computer science** beginning fall 1996 (or possibly spring 1996). Applicants should possess a Ph.D. or M.S. in computer science; those with completed Ph.D. will receive preferential screening, but M.S. applicants will also be considered. The computer science major at Bluffton College is situated in the science department, and students follow a curriculum similar to the ACM guidelines for small colleges. Current requirements include strong physical science and mathematical components such as discrete math, calculus, numerical analysis, introductory physics and digital electronics. Applicants should feel comfortable teaching the usual computer science courses (computer programming, data structures, file processing, assembly language, computer architecture, operating systems and programming languages) from both a mathematical and physical perspective. By teaching the courses listed above (some on alternate years) the successful applicant will be teaching most of the courses in the computer science curriculum. Additionally, a liberal arts computer course exists. Review of applications begins Nov. 15 until an appointment is made.

Please submit letter of application and resume or vita to **Amy M. Tabler, Assistant to the V.P. and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.** Equal opportunity employer

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Send resume to **3737 Bahia Vista, #11, Sarasota, FL 34232**.

Bluffton College announces a full-time, tenure-track faculty position as **assistant/associate professor of psychology** beginning fall 1996. Ph.D. (master's considered); psychology generalist with ability to teach in several areas of psychology; evidence or promise of teaching excellence is essential. Interdisciplinary teaching competencies will be viewed favorably. Graduate teaching experience and/or interest in teaching in an education master's program will be a plus. The successful candidate will teach courses in introductory psychology and at least three of the following: psychology of learning, cognitive processes, abnormal psychology, personality, therapeutic psychology and biological psychology.

Consideration of applications begins Jan. 15, 1996, and continues until an appointment is made. Send letter of interest and resume or vita to **Amy M. Tabler, Assistant to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.** Equal opportunity employer

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Administrator for **Belleville Mennonite School**, K-12 program. Qualifications: master's degree and certification in administration. Position available July 1996.

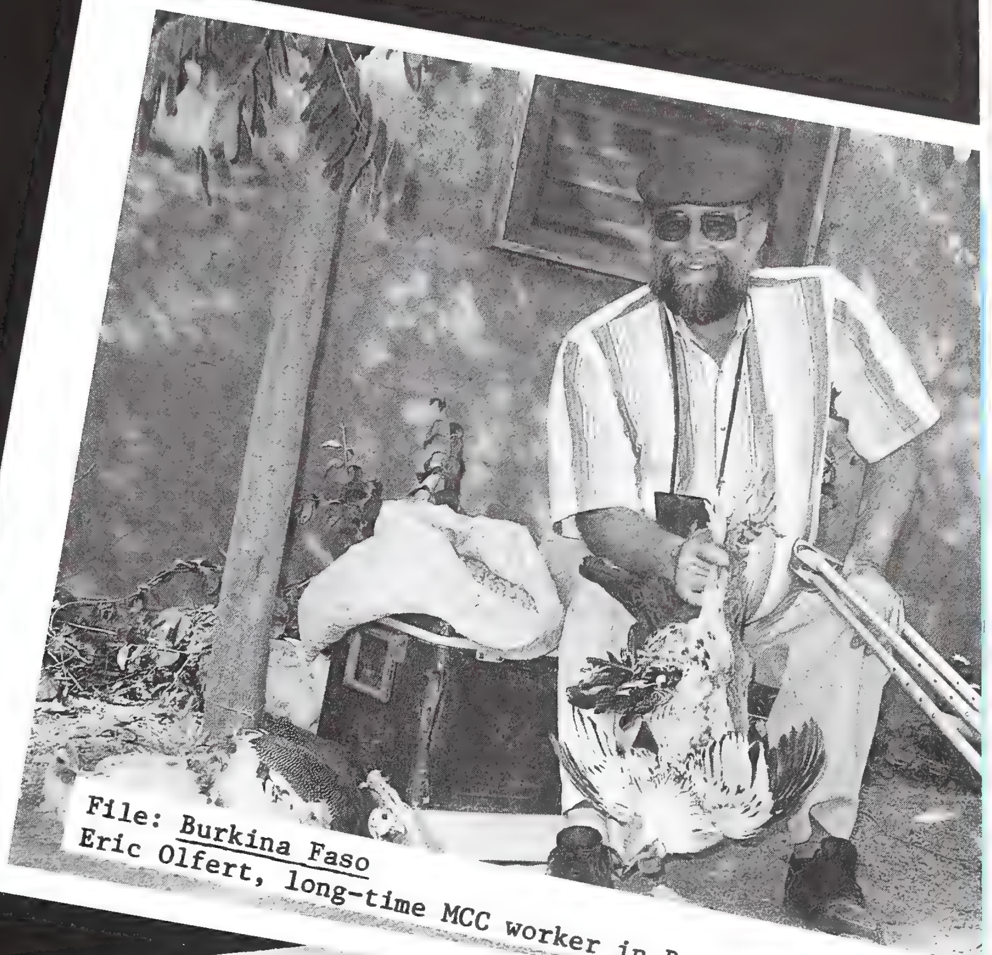
Contact **John Yoder, R.D. 1 Box 18, Reedsville, PA 17084; (717) 667-6463, by Nov. 30**.

Mennonite Central Committee is accepting applications for **co-secretary for Africa** (programs in Northern Sub-Sahara). This three-year position, based in Akron, Pa., is available April 1, 1996. Qualifications include a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree, knowledge of the realities of Africa, previous work experience with MCC in the region, ability to manage diverse administrative workload, commitment to participatory decision making, working with local churches in the field, and international understanding, justice and peace. Fluency in French is strongly recommended. Travel required.

Interested people in the United States should contact **Dwight McFadden, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500; (717) 859-1151**. In Canada contact **MCC Canada Personnel, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381**. Applications due **Feb. 1, 1996**.

give and take

Giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Ephesians 5:20



File: Burkina Faso
Eric Olfert, long-time MCC worker in Barsalagho.

Feb 1 – Barsalagho – It seemed like every village we visited today had a chicken or other gift for us. It was a bit embarassing to be receiving so much. Then I realized that by working with those villages, we had entered into a relationship with them. Their ~~to~~ giving us gifts was necessary to keep the relationship mutual and healthy. It was a good day!

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Reviews

BOOKS

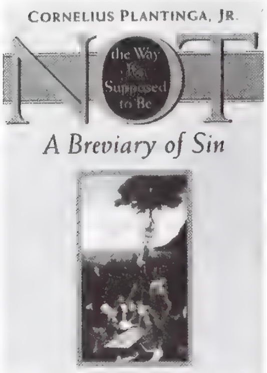
THE SCOPE OF SIN

Not the Way It's Supposed To Be: A Breviary of Sin *by Cornelius Plantinga Jr. (Eerdmans, 1995, 202 pages)*

Reviewed by Arthur P. Boers, Waterloo, Ont.

Looking for handles on how to address sin, one cannot do better than beginning with Cornelius Plantinga Jr.'s fine book.

Plantinga notes that our old awareness of sin has slipped and changed, even though sin remains the main human problem. We need to recover our knowledge of sin in vocabulary that is currently meaningful. Plantinga accomplishes this by writing in an accessible style citing current, down-to-earth examples.



He notes that sin is more than breaking rules and laws. It is a "breaking of covenant with one's Savior. Sin is the smearing of a relationship, the grieving of one's divine parent and benefactor, a betrayal of the partner to whom one is joined by a holy bond." Sin does not only contaminate individuals and communities but defiles the proper relationship to God.

While such studies may seem depressing, Plantinga meets his goal of doing it in such a way as "to renew our memory of the integrity of creation and to sharpen our eye for the beauty of grace."

Plantinga keeps dreaming of better times when "God would put things right again," like biblical prophets of old. He points to "the way things ought to be," the opposite of sin, and a good summary of shalom.

While strongly and appropriately emphasizing individual responsibility, Plantinga also looks at family and generational sins ("the sins of the fathers") and systemic societal sins: "Doesn't society at least share in the responsibility for certain crimes against it? When society via its legislatures funds some of its schools twice as generously as others, when it provides poor schools for poor people ... when it invents gambling schemes and tries to entice its own citizens to wager their money on them, when it constitutionally and judicially protects rap lyrics that glamorize the killing of police officers and the terrorizing of women—when society does these things, can it completely wash its hands of crimes by the very resentment, despair and greed it has engendered?"

Plantinga is a pithy writer, eminently quotable. Try this: "If we try to fill our hearts with anything besides the God of the universe, we find that we are overfed but undernourished, ... day by day, week by week, year after year, we are thinning down to a mere outline of a human being."

Plantinga's hard-headed, theologically sound look at sin has evangelical merit. He notes, "For the sober truth is that without full disclosure on sin, the gospel of grace becomes impertinent, unnecessary and finally uninteresting."

FIELD-TESTED FOR CHILDREN

Little Stories for Little Children: A Worship Resource *by Donna McKee Rhodes (Herald Press, 1995, 127 pages)*

Reviewed by Carol Flickinger, Newton, Kan.

Little Stories for Little Children is an aptly named collection of lessons designed for use with young children in a variety of worship settings. The stories were first used during Sunday morning worship services, but they could be shared in Sunday school or midweek activity classes, at home, or other devotional times.

The selections are informal in nature and, though well-structured, involve more open-ended participation by youngsters than some typical storytelling sessions. Although the emphasis is on "little," indicating "short" stories and "young" (preschool through primary grades) children, one of the pluses of this resource is that it can be used as is or expanded to fit various situations.

Each of the 52 short (two-page) selections includes Scripture background, the theme for the story (corresponding loosely to the church-year calendar), a familiar object (around which the story is told), the story (which sometimes includes suggestions for presentations) and a

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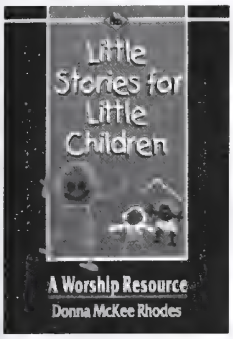
brief closing prayer. With a few exceptions the objects are readily available in most households, and only minimal preparation is required in order to ready materials for sharing the stories.

One significant element of each presentation is an opening conversation time that helps listeners focus on the theme for the day. During or after the story, other "tasks" reinforce the message. Examples include asking the children to help mix ingredients, or to perform some follow-up activity after the session, or the sharing of a small object as a reminder of the conversation.



McKee Rhodes developed these stories to follow themes used at the Stone Church of the Brethren, Huntingdon, Pa., where she serves as minister of nurture. Her work has the authentic tone of material that has been field-tested with real children in actual situations. The author's background in early childhood/elementary education is evident both in her choice of material and her approach. *Little Stories for Little Children* will be a handy resource, especially for adults who wish to be more inclusive of children in worship but don't know where to begin.

FOR WOMEN AND MOTHERS

Woman's Work *by Anne Baxter and Nora O. Lozano-Diaz (Herald Press, 1994, 120 pages) and* **No More Lone Ranger Moms** *by Donna Partow (Bethany House, 1995, 203 pages)*

Reviewed by Faith Hershberger Penner, Ames, Iowa

Woman's Work is written for the busy Christian woman who wants to study women's issues reflectively but doesn't have a lot of time. Designed for use with a study group, the book in each chapter presents a topic, highlights the main issues to discuss, offers reflection questions and then lists resources for further study. The 13 chapters include topics like "Women and their Gifts," "Women and Christ," "Women and their Body Image" and "Women and their Friendships."

This book only whetted my appetite. An opportunity to discuss each chapter with a support group might have left me more satisfied. Many of the essays and reflection questions are thought-provoking, excellent discussion-starters. The resource list is also a way to delve deeper into a topic. The essays invite each woman to be transformed into the person she was created to be.

Although not as spiritually or intellectually challenging, *No More Lone Ranger Moms*, like *Woman's Work*, calls women to learn from and support each other. Writing in an empathetic voice, Partow challenges women to join forces in the tough job of parenting.

Since having children, I have lived in four communities. (My oldest child is 8.) It takes hard work to find friends with whom one can laugh and cry and who will take your children on a moment's notice. Part of the key, of course, is being willing to do the same.

For lonely mothers who feel cut off from the help of family and friends, this book contains a wealth of practical ideas for how to build a support network. I am more partial to Partow's ideas for more informal, smaller support systems, but the larger, more formal organizations she discusses might better fit another woman's needs.

These books serve different purposes. *Woman's Work* is more comprehensive. *No More Lone Ranger Moms* is more specific. Even so, the authors share a desire to have women live more enriched lives.

Resources

• • ▼

- **Generation Why** Bible studies for high school youth are available in the following areas: **Who's In, Who's Out** (studies from Jonah and Ruth on prejudice and diversity in God's family) $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn., **How to Be a True Friend** (explores the meaning of true friendship using various Scripture texts) $14.95 U.S./$21.25 Cdn., **The Radical Reign: Parables of Jesus**, $14.95 U.S./$21.25 Cdn., and **You Can't Make Me Go to Church! The Church of Acts**, $12.95 U.S./$18.50 Cdn. Study books include creative activities, discussion questions and reproducible sheets. To order call Faith & Life Press, 1-800-743-2484.
- **Celebrating Advent** by Helen Johns (Faith & Life Press, 1995, $9.95 U.S./ $12.95 Cdn.) is part of the Fast Lane Bible Study series for junior high. This five-session guide is geared for junior and senior high youth. To order call FLP, 1-800-743-2484; in Canada (204) 888-6781; e-mail newtonflp@aol.com.
- **Welcoming New Christians: A Guide to the Christian Initiation of Adults** by Jane Hoober Peifer and John Stahl-Wert (Faith & Life Press, 1995, $24.95 U.S./$35.75 Cdn.) helps prepare new believers for baptism and membership. A companion video is also available for $9.95 U.S./$14.20 Cdn. To order call FLP, 1-800-743-2484; in Canada (204) 888-6781; e-mail newtonflp@aol.com.
- **Hymnal Masterworks: Classical Guitar**, performed by Tom Harder, includes "Sweet Hour of Prayer," "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" and more. To order call FLP, 1-800-743-2484; in Canada (204) 888-6781; e-mail newtonflp@aol.com. Audiocassette $10.95 U.S./$15.75 Cdn.; compact disc $17.95 U.S./$25.50 Cdn.
- **Twenty Most Asked Questions About the Amish and Mennonites** by Merle and Phyllis Good (Good Books, 1995, 2nd. ed., $6.95 U.S.) looks at culture, pacifism, education and more.
- **Meditations for Moms-to-Be** by Sandra Drescher-Lehman (Good Books, 1995, $7.95 U.S.) is a collection of meditations for pregnant women.
- **Brother, Brother** (13-minute video) recreates a modern-day Good Samaritan story focusing on the Nazareth Christian Hospital in Israel. A study guide is included. For information contact The Nazareth Project, 8 N. Queen St., Suite 700G, Lancaster, PA 17603; (717) 392-4365. The video is available for purchase from MBM Media Ministries, 1-800-999-3534.
- **A Spanish welcome brochure** explaining beliefs, practices and history of the Mennonite church is available. Titled "Bienvenidos a Neustra Familia de Fe," the brochure can be imprinted with your church's name. Order from MBM Media Ministries, 1-800-999-3534.

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Editorial

A blessing and not a curse

In Genesis, work begins as a blessing and becomes a bane. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15). After Adam and Eve's disobedience, God says, "By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground" (Genesis 3:19). One of our tasks is to help make our work and others' work a blessing and not a curse.

Work is one of the ways we reflect God's image. The creation of the world is called God's work (Genesis 2:2). An important part of who we are, of how we are created, is our need to do creative work. When we do not work, or when our work is not creative, we are not being true to who we are, to how God has made us.

In this issue (page 3) Frank Albrecht describes the plight of many in the world who must work—and work hard—just to survive. People like Zulma and Henri must work long, backbreaking hours for low wages. Other people cannot find work, and they slip into a listless despair.

We all need work to survive—both to provide ourselves resources with which to live and to make our lives meaningful. It's usually not necessary to convince Mennonites to work; most of us have a strong work ethic. (There may be more of a need to convince us of the need for a Sabbath rest.) Yet many among us struggle with how to make our work more meaningful.

Being good stewards, being servants of God, requires that we look closely at the work we do. We must find ways to make our work and the work of others more joyful and constructive.

What makes work meaningful? In his seminal book *Good Work*, E.F. Schumacher calls for "joyful, constructive labor." He lists three purposes of human work: (1) "to provide necessary and useful goods and services," (2) "to enable every one of us to use and thereby perfect our gifts like good stewards" and (3) "to do so in service to and cooperation with others." To be meaningful, he says, work should contribute to our economic, spiritual and social lives.

Schumacher also describes bad work. We should "reject meaningless, boring, stultifying or nerve-racking work in which a [person] is made the servant of a machine or a system," he writes.

Do we do this for ourselves? Do we do so for others?

Ego-centered behavior: People's need for meaningful, creative work sometimes leads to selfish, ego-centered behavior. Some leave their families to do what they want. Or the work they find is merely for their own benefit. Our need for creativity needs to be balanced by our need to cooperate with and be of service to others.

Pursuing creative work may seem privileged. Only a few can afford such a luxury. But we all can find ways to make our current work more creative.

Or we may need to change our attitudes about what is meaningful work. Jim Smucker (page 6) reminds us that being an entrepreneur can be a spiritual calling. Do we talk with each other in our congregations about what we do? Do we affirm each other in our occupations?

My parents lived through the Great Depression. My dad tells of being overjoyed to find work for $1 a day. Back then, he tells me, you didn't think about what you wanted to do and then train for it. You took whatever job you could find and stuck with it.

Between them, my parents worked hard, serving others and raising seven children in the process. They experienced "joyful, constructive labor" without necessarily intending to.

We may not have a lot of opportunities to pursue a variety of jobs, but we must find or make our work creative and meaningful. At the same time we should reject meaningless, stultifying work for ourselves and others.

Work, whatever kind of activity it may be, is a major part of who we are. It takes up much of our time, perhaps a third of our adult lives. Being good stewards, being servants of God, requires that we look closely at the work we do. We must find ways to make our work and the work of others more joyful and constructive. *Gordon Houser*

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A rearview glimpse of the future / p. 11

Ernst Harder: a house with many windows / p. 12

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THE Mennonite

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Pandora's secret (see page 3)

What I learned from failing church planting (see page 5)

Church growth: success and failure

Prologue

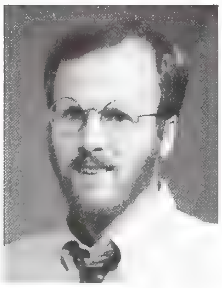
From 1984 to 1994, General Conference Mennonite Church membership declined from 65,214 to 61,924. While the quality of our membership may have gone up, what do we do with these numbers?

This issue looks at church growth through a couple of stories. One (page 3) tells about a church where membership is increasing without the church necessarily focusing on greater numbers.

Mathew Swora (page 5) tells of his experience trying to plant a church in Detroit. Both stories offer lessons. Given our membership decline, perhaps we need to pay attention. Marilyn Miller, director of outreach ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries, is more than willing to offer help to anyone interested in church growth (see page 7).

As we close another church year and look toward Advent, Jacob Elias presents a Bible study (page 11) about the future advent of our Lord.

Robert Kreider (page 12) offers a tribute to Ernst Harder, who died Oct. 25 after a lifetime of service in North America and abroad.



Violence continues to rear its ugly head. Two more Christian Peacemaker Teams workers were beaten by Israeli settlers (page 14) on the same day the Israeli prime minister was assassinated. Pray for the Prince of Peace to come to that troubled land. *gh*

Next issue: Christmas from barrooms to China

Cover: Design by John Hiebert

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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General
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How a rural church in Ohio has found ways to grow

PANDORA'S SECRET

Bob Moeller

St. John's Mennonite Church sits in the middle of a cornfield, a mile or two out of Pandora, Ohio, on a rural highway (not a spot church-growth experts would have chosen). There's no interstate exit close by, no new subdivisions sprouting up down the road. Nor is it close to a major population center.

Yet the average worship attendance of St. John's stands close to 600, with about 350 children enrolled in Sunday school and almost 270 in Pioneer Clubs. The church population almost matches the size of the town. In fact, the congregation has grown so large that the trustees voted to build the new gymnasium *behind* the church to shield its size from the community. "We didn't want to give anyone the wrong impression."

A big Dutch heart: For 18 years, Ted VanderEnde and Dorothy, his wife, have served St. John's. When they arrived, St. John's, like many rural ministries, faced limited resources. Seventy adults and their children showed up for Sunday morning.

Before coming, the VanderEndes ministered for four years in Selma, Ala., and for two years as missionaries in Belgium. Ted is a native of the Netherlands, and in this part of western Ohio his Dutch accent and tall frame made him something of a novelty.

"It's natural for me to laugh, cry and make myself vulnerable in the pulpit," he says. "God used my strong Dutch accent, halting speech and personable style of preaching to open the hearts of these people."

The VanderEndes also built bridges to people when they adopted three children with special needs. "People will seek out the church," Dorothy says, "when they see the church identify with their pain."

Missionary technique: When asked to explain the church's growth, the board's chair, a computer software executive who commutes nearly 20 miles to attend St. John's, immediately brings up God's Word.

"There's a focus on the Word people are looking for," he explains. "When my son was 16, he had a hunger for more biblical training. He started attending St. John's, and his mom and I soon followed him."

The board chair typifies many in the congregation who commute from Findlay, Ohio, a community of 45,000. But their coming didn't happen by accident. Early on, Ted traveled to Findlay to start small-group Bible studies. His entrepreneurial background in missions came in handy. He would meet with a group of 10 to 20 people in Findlay for six weeks and then start another group. Eventually many of those discipled in his studies drifted to St. John's services.

"Soon I had people inviting me to their homes," Ted says. "The opportunities for ministry multiplied. I intentionally tried to attract seekers, many of whom were business and professional people, to the church."

The influx of new families created a fresh atmosphere. "A common disease of the small-town, rural church," says one elder, "is for one or two families to be in control. Out of all the elders seated at this table, only one is home-grown."

"Jack here," Ted chimes in, "was

'Believe God's promises': *Ted and Dorothy VanderEnde near St. John's meetinghouse*

> **"People will seek out the church when they see the church identify with their pain."**
>
> ***Dorothy VanderEnde***

elected to become chair of the congregation after only three years of attending the church."

The niche factor: St. John's has reached other outsiders through children's programs. "There are always more people in an area than you think," Ted says. "For example, when we would attend our children's school programs, I was amazed at how many people I had never seen before. So to reach these kids for Christ, we focused on children's ministries. Kids bring kids with them to church."

"Our children's clubs on Wednesday evenings draw parents as well," says another elder. "When children accept the Lord, it isn't long before their parents start showing up as well."

Regarding Pandora's youth, Ted says, "Small towns tend to produce a high level of sexual activity among teenagers. There's more hanky-panky going on in a town like this than you think. So we've also placed an emphasis on youth programming."

But not everything has worked.

"We learned the hard way that special weeks of evangelistic meetings just don't work here," Ted says. "At most, people are willing to schedule a Saturday evening."

Their attempt at a program for singles also flopped; St. John's singles didn't like being singled out.

But St. John's policy when starting a program is to test it for a few months. If it bombs, the church reverts to the program the new one replaced.

"Nine times out of 10," Dorothy says, "the congregation likes the new program. But we never introduce the new program as replacing the old one. The old one is still there and can be retrieved if needed."

First-rate singing: As part of their vision, Ted and Dorothy also focused on improving the quality of St. John's worship service.

"It's common in rural churches for a song leader to get up and say, 'Who has a favorite?'" Ted says. "I suggested that the service have a theme in keeping with the message, such as the sovereignty of God.

"If the singing was poor, we at times would stop the congregation in the middle of a hymn and say, 'Wait a minute. This is just not good singing, folks. We can do better than this.' Some probably do not like that, but together we push to do things well."

"Whenever Dorothy and I have sensed a problem," Ted says, "we ask, 'Can we talk to you? We've heard that something is wrong.'

"I never believe the witness of one. If someone says, 'There are a lot of people who feel this way,' I'll say, 'Bring together five people, and I'll meet with you.'"

Rooted identity: Today, St. John's leaders worry about the changing pace of rural life and the increasing pressure to make a living.

Traditionally the husband and wife worked side by side on the farm. Now one or both must also work outside the home. The need for marriage and family counseling is increasing.

Given such difficulties of rural ministries, Ted seems amazed at what's happened in Pandora.

"Recently I drove through several small towns in our area," Ted says, "and I asked myself, 'What if I had been faithful for all these years and no one showed up?'

"My answers seemed trite: 'Well, believe God's promises' or, 'Just stick with it.' But I think we all need some measure of visible success in order to keep going. Ultimately, though, you survive in such a setting because you focus on who you are in Christ."

Reprinted from Leadership Journal, *Summer 1994. Bob Moeller is author of* For Better, For Worse, For Keeps *and* Love in Action: Healing Conflict in Your Church *(Multnomah Books, 1994). He is also author of* The Stirring, *a novel (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1994).*

Experience taught the author some lessons about planting Mennonite congregations.

WHAT I LEARNED FROM FAILING CHURCH PLANTING

Mathew Swora

I failed. No other word does justice to the sleepless nights, the tears and the churning gut I experienced. What I failed at was church planting. Rather than disqualifying me, I hope that by crashing and burning I have something worth saying about Mennonite efforts to plant new churches.

I signed on with the Detroit Project, an inter-Mennonite effort to start new churches in the Detroit metropolitan area, in 1991. I came up a marginal prospect on the church planter personality inventory administered by Mennonite Board of Missions [of the Mennonite Church]. That should have told me something. But I had the advantage of having just moved to the Detroit area for my wife Becky's work as a certified nurse-midwife. And I was enthusiastic about seeing an Anabaptist-Mennonite movement take shape in an urban, multiethnic rust-belt area like the one in which I had grown up. My enthusiasm remains.

We kept church growth potential in mind when we looked for a neighborhood to call home. We settled in the Southfield-Lathrup Village area, an area of good schools, affordable homes, racially integrated and safe neighborhoods. And its population was changing. Maybe the newcomers would be spiritually open.

Church planting in Detroit proper seemed out of the question to us. In that economically and politically abandoned city, the many churches there are largely responsible for holding things together. But there's not much room for adding more churches. I got to know many precious saints in that city, whose numbers and influence match those of the gangs and drug dealers, but who don't get as much public attention.

Bible teachers: Many of these saints labor full-time at low-paying jobs while also ministering full-time to needy people in distressed communities. I began to wonder instead if we shouldn't be providing resource people like Bible teachers and community development workers, in partnership with existing churches, as we already do with churches elsewhere in the world.

My vision was to plant a cell-group church in which each cell group would evangelize and grow into a church that would spin off other cell-group churches. Furthermore, it would be a racially and ethnically integrated peace church.

In my search for a fool-proof system for church planting, I found that most of the church-planting literature assumes that there is already a leadership nucleus, a group of people large enough to attract and keep others. The opening chapters usually are about how to start Sunday school or a deacon board and get legally incorporated. But actually getting our first group together to become a cohesive unit with a shared vision was where I got stuck. There's no one-size-fits-all program for that.

After settling into our Lathrup Village home, I went regularly about the neighborhood, greeting new families as they moved in. What I found out, however, was that most of the people moving into our area were either Chaldeans (Iraqi Catholics) or middle-class African-American families. Their churches were already important to most of them. Those who weren't committed Christians tended to respond less favorably to my efforts to establish neighborly relations. That reflects well on the Christians, and I made some great friends that way, but it didn't help the church-planting effort.

I also tried gathering people of Mennonite background into a church core. I contacted Mennonite college alumni in the area by mail, but only a third of them sent back a response in the self-addressed, stamped envelope I enclosed with a survey. The vast majority indicated no interest. Had some of them come to escape their Mennonite upbringing? Or did my lack of a recognizably ethnic Mennonite name put any of them off? I met other ex-Mennonites who once had some interest in seeing Mennonite churches start and grow but who had over the years become faithfully and comfortably involved in other churches. If they were deriving spiritual benefit from their new memberships, and if they were adding some worthwhile things to those churches, I chose to not even try to pressure them

To transplant churches we must be willing to commission and send people we'd like to keep in our established churches. Some of us must even be willing to leave perfectly good churches in which we'd normally want to stay, if so called by God.

into something else.

By the grace of God one small cell group did finally assemble and meet for about a year. The many good things we experienced in our first and only cell group made it truly a church for me. But our inability to grow or even keep some continuity from week to week had me so frustrated that I was in danger of hating the people God had given me to love.

I was also discovering Anabaptist-minded Christians and peace churches already in the area, some racially integrated. They just weren't officially "Mennonite." They were also small and struggling. Did I have the right to compete with them?

Suburbia is where everyone goes to get away from each other. I often felt frustrated by a great wall of indifference, individualism and anonymity there. Work, more so than neighborhood or school, may be the closest thing to community among most suburbanites.

This presents the "lone stranger" church planter with a dilemma. If the church planter works full-time in addition to ministry efforts, the combination of work and family commitments may crowd out time for large-scale, systematic outreach and discipling. But if the "lone stranger" relies on conference financial support to free up time for ministry, he or she may be out of the workday world of the people to be reached.

So many corporations are downsizing and work hours increasing that the cell-group model of church requires

A CONGREGATIONAL GROWTH QUIZ

1. Approximately what percentage of North Americans can accurately be described as "highly spiritually committed"?
   (a) 10% (b) 20% (c) 30% (d) 40%

2. What percentage of North American teens believe you can be a good Christian and not go to church?
   (a) 10% (b) 25% (c) 50% (d) 75%

3. If a church is going to begin a new, contemporary worship service, the best time to offer it is on Saturday evening.
   (a) true (b) false

4. Women are more likely than men to have confidence in the church as an institution and to be active in its programs.
   (a) true (b) false

5. The single greatest reason people give for joining a particular local congregation is:
   (a) their positive feelings for the pastor
   (b) the encouragement of a friend
   (c) the location of the church
   (d) the church's educational program
   (e) the denomination of the church

6. The best way to follow up on a break in worship, class or group attendance by a young person or an adult is with a
   (a) phone call (b) letter (c) personal visit

7. The best way to follow up on a visitor to worship who could be a prospective member is with a
   (a) phone call (b) letter (c) personal visit

8. Young adults (18-35 years of age) are most likely to disagree with older adults over
   (a) the divinity of Christ
   (b) the importance of church attendance
   (c) how God answers prayer
   (d) sexual values

9. Some churches do not grow because the potential involvement of new members is threatening to the present members.
   (a) true (b) false

10. Most unchurched people are really searching for a church that requires conformity to a rigorous belief system.
   (a) true (b) false

Source: The Andrew Center, answers on page 9

New churches are often more effective at reaching and incorporating new people than are older ones. And that must be our primary motive for growing new churches. Anything else, like more of "our kind of churches," hardly seems like a motive God would honor.

more of overworked professionals than many of them can or want to give. That's why we found it hard to build momentum or continuity in our cell group.

Face-to-face healing communities: I saw some megachurches breaking through suburbia's great wall of anonymity by way of small groups for nearly every kind of person and need. By their sheer numbers they can generate scores of small, face-to-face healing communities. By the time their churches reach 4,000 to 6,000 members, their members already know that 2,000 of them will leave to help start a new church. And they're excited about their coming split. Their new churches hit the ground running with support groups already in place, ready to minister and grow. The members can be effective evangelists simply by inviting their co-workers and relatives to the right group. And it works, especially if the inviter and the invitee share the same need.

As a "fisher of people" in this suburban setting, I felt like one angler in a little rowboat, adrift on a featureless sea, while all around me giant trawlers were chugging about with state-of-the-art equipment, sucking up everything for miles around. I'm not thrilled with everything about megachurches, but if some of them are effectively reaching needy people and motivating them for mission, maybe they could teach us a few things that even small churches can do.

Thus I decided in February 1993 to appreciate our one cell group for what it was—and not for what I needed it to become—and to resign from church planting. I simply didn't have it in me to keep going, let alone start over. The conference mission staff to whom I

Here's how you can help

Marilyn Miller

The most effective evangelistic endeavor under heaven is planting new churches," according to church growth scholar C. Peter Wagner. The statement is supported by three reasons:

1. The unchurched are more apt to attend a new church than an established one.
2. People who are nominally involved in an established church often become more involved and committed as they help nurture a beginning church.
3. A parent church often takes on new life as a result of birthing a church.

Some object to church planting on the grounds that it will harm the parent church. Studies have shown that if a church is properly planted, the reverse usually happens. On the average, it takes a church six months to replace members and finances if the pastor has a positive, healthy attitude toward the church planting.

Here are a few actions that can be taken to help plant a church:

1. Consider whether your congregation is ready to give birth to a new church or to establish a sister church relationship with a new church in your area conference. If so, contact the mission committee of your area conference or my office and request resources that give guidelines, steps and support in doing so.
2. If you are a pastor and have the gifts for being a catalyst, consider church planting. Effective church planters are needed.
3. If you are a layperson, consider giving six months to two years of volunteer service in a setting where a new church is being established. Many new churches need mature Christians to help disciple newcomers in the faith and to help in various areas of church work.

If you are planning a job transition, consider moving to a city where you can support a church that is getting started. Many of our new church plants would welcome with much gratitude any time, energy, gifts and abilities, financial resources, prayers and spiritual fortitude you could share with them.

Marilyn Miller is director of outreach ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Marilyn has experience as a church planter and works with congregations, small groups and individuals interested in starting new congregations. You may write her at 2000 Dartmouth, Boulder, CO 80303, or call or fax her at (303) 499-1565.

related were gracious and supportive during this difficult time of closure. We're still friends with the cell group members even though we've dispersed and don't meet anymore. And I got my peace of mind back. So there are some success stories in this "failure."

At that same time I was preaching and worshiping every other week in the Mennonite church across the Detroit River in Windsor, Ont., while they were between pastors. That rescued my sense of pastoral calling and identity.

I still believe in evangelism and in starting new churches. New communities, new relationships and new lives are all part of the new creation Christ brings (2 Corinthians 5:17). New churches are often more effective at reaching and incorporating new people than are older ones. And that must be our primary motive for growing new churches. Anything else, like more of "our kind of churches," hardly seems like a motive God would honor.

But now I see that there is no such thing as "church planting." Churches are not planted, they are transplanted. There must be a church seedling strong enough to transplant in a new locale. Our cell group never got that strong.

Solitary heroes: A seedling implies

Resources for church growth

Annotations by Marilyn Miller

- *Life to Share* by John K. Stoner, Jim Egli and G. Edwin Bontrager (Faith & Life Press, 1991)
- *The Win Arn Growth Report*, published by Church Growth, 2670 Myrtle #201, Monrovia, CA 91016; 1-800-423-4844. A monthly four-sheet collection of to-the-point articles on how to have an effective, growing church. Available without charge.
- *Urban Connections*, edited by Stanley W. Green. This quarterly periodical of about 14 pages addresses the concerns and challenges of urban ministry. Stories of church planting ministries of justice and congregational growth. Published by Evangelism and Church Development department of Mennonite Board of Missions, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370; (219) 294-7523.
- *Net Results*, edited by Herb Miller. "New Ideas in Evangelism and Church Vitality." A 24-page periodical published monthly by the National Evangelistic Association of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ). One of the best magazines on church growth. Features one-page blurbs from other mainline denominations, too. To order call 1-800-762-8094, or write 5001 Avenue N., Lubbock, TX 79412-2917; $29.95 U.S./$38 Cdn.
- *Evangelism Canada*: A Canadian Digest for Church Evangelism and Growth. Reporting of Mennonite Brethren home mission activities, and on-target articles on congregational growth. Published by the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 3-169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5; $8 Cdn. per year (about 4 issues).
- *Ministry Currents*: "Perspectives on Ministry in an Era of Change." Quarterly publication of the Barna Research Group, Ltd., 722 W. Broadway, Glendale, CA 91204. Excellent articles giving statistical information on trends in the United States. Speaks to church program and growth. Clear format; graphs and visuals. $20 U.S. per year.
- *Global Church Growth*, edited by Kent Hunter. Purpose of this descriptive 20-page periodical is to report from the church growth perspective what God is doing in world evangelization and to share effective strategies, insights and resources. Order from Church Growth Center, Corunna, IN 46730; $12.50 U.S. for one year.

a seedbed. And that is what established churches are for. Instead we think of the perfect church as as finished product. And we expect a few solitary heroes—the "lone strangers" —to carry out the Great Commission for us, "to go forth into all the world and make disciples" (Matthew 28:18). They go alone into areas where they know almost no one and are expected to make relationships, earn trust, make disciples and knit them together into a self-supporting church in three to four years before conference financial support diminishes or disappears.

In some densely populated urban areas, especially among certain ethnic groups for whom extended family and neighborhood are important, this may work. Or it may work if the "lone stranger" is no stranger—if he or she is already a local resident with lots of relationships.

But to transplant churches we must be willing to commission and send people we'd like to keep in our established churches. Some of us must even be willing to leave perfectly good churches in which we'd normally want to stay, if so called by God. With some financial help, enough of the transplanting team members' time can be released to develop the relationships they make. They would start as a group with the size and commitment to attract and incorporate seekers.

If it would be too much of a burden for one church to send out a team, perhaps transplanting teams can be assembled from several churches. The team members may not even have to relocate geographically. They can enter networks of people within or on the edge of their "Mennonite belts."

This is nothing new for Mennonites. Most of our churches started this way, but more often as a result of painful church splits, emigration or by haphazardly catching some of the people who relocate for work or education. Less often have we intentionally commissioned and sent the pillars of our established churches to help get new ones built. But for those who leave and for those who stay—and not only for those who join later—being uprooted and transplanted could be a good growing experience, even one worth failing at sometimes.

Mathew Swora has been pastor at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan., since August 1993.

Answers to congregational growth quiz

1. **(a) 10%** The exact percentage who could be described as highly spiritually committed is 12 percent. These people are faithful in worship attendance, charitable giving, church involvement, service to others and prayer.
2. **(d) 75%** Seventy-four percent of Protestant teens and 82 percent of Catholic teens feel you can be a good Christian and not go to church. Those figures have been constant for several years. More recent studies are showing figures for adults that are remarkably similar.
3. **(b) false** Saturday evening is not necessarily the best time—it depends on the particular church and community. Many Saturday evening services seem to level off at 30 to 35 people in attendance. Churches often have considerable success with contemporary services on Sunday morning—at an earlier time or a later time than the traditional service.
4. **(a) true** Women are definitely more likely than men to have confidence in the church and to be active in its programs. And teenagers and young adults tend to accept that role model.
5. **(b) the encouragement of a friend** This is the number one factor in causing people to choose a particular "church home," though all the factors listed are important.
6. **(a) phone call** Letters are generally not successful and may be misinterpreted as critical. A personal visit may be overreacting if the break in attendance has been a short one. A casual but sincere phone call expressing interest is three times more likely to succeed than a letter.
7. **(c) personal visit** When someone has visited worship services, then a personal visit is by far the best option. This makes an extremely positive impression on most potential members.
8. **(d) sexual values** Young adults, as a whole, differ radically from older adults in views of premarital intercourse, abortion, birth control, homosexuality and divorce. Tensions over these issues often keep young adults out of the church.
9. **(a) true** Many church members are happy with the life of the church as it is. Growth in membership brings changes to the church and sharing of power and decisions.
10. **(b) false** While a few unchurched people do respond positively to churches that require conformity to a rigorous doctrinal system, far more unchurched people are "turned off" by rigid doctrinal demands and are more interested in a church that helps them develop their own spiritual lives.

Letters

PERCEPTION OF HISTORY WRONG

In his reflections on the integration vote at Wichita '95 (Oct. 24 issue), J.B. Miller writes that he celebrated the delegates' decision "because the merger signifies the reunification of a church that was split years ago." It may be a minor point in Mr. Miller's article, but it is a wrong one and needs correction because it is about the way the two bodies perceive each other.

The General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church were never one church and therefore never split. While the Mennonite Church includes the oldest area conferences and congregations in North America, the GCMC was founded first, in 1860.

The Old Mennonites, as they are sometimes known, first organized themselves into area conferences, starting with Franconia (1725) and Lancaster (1775) in Pennsylvania. It wasn't until the 1870s and later that the various area conferences started joining to form boards for missions, publishing and education. The first assembly of delegates from area conferences wasn't held until 1898, and the name "Mennonite Church" didn't evolve until well into the 20th century. Lancaster, the largest of any MC or GC area conference, didn't even join the Mennonite Church until 1971.

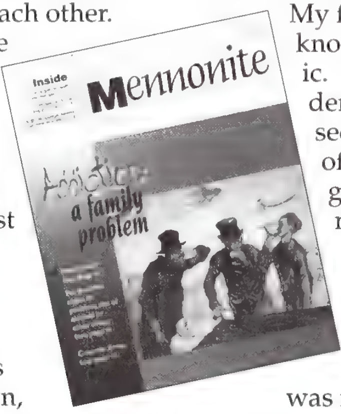
The forces behind the formation of the GCMC largely were independent congregations of recent immigrants in Ohio, Ontario and Iowa. For various reasons, including geography and experiences, they never joined any of the U.S. Old Mennonite groups. The one notable exception among the GC founders was John H. Oberholtzer and his followers (today the Eastern District Conference), who had been expelled from Franconia in 1847 for being too progressive.

While public perception may be otherwise, the Mennonite Church is not the mother conference from which the GCMC emerged. History shows the GCMC was born independent of the Old Mennonites and that, with the exception of the Oberholtzer group, there was no schism. Therefore, the two should be viewed as equals in the integration process. In fact, the GCMC was created, in part, to unite all North American Mennonites under one banner, so the vote to integrate could be seen as a major step toward realizing an original GC vision. *Rich Preheim, Newton, Kan.*

ADDICTION MORE THAN DRUGS

Re the addiction issue (Oct. 24) of *The Mennonite*: Addiction is something I've been around all of my 27 years. My father was, and as far as I know still is, a using alcoholic. My mother is co-dependent and addicted to money, security and the false sense of peace and protection she gets from people and money.

I started to use at age 11 because I wanted to fit in with those around me. I got a false sense of belonging because I felt I was more accepted.



Addiction is the bottom line of Satan's darts. And it doesn't have to be illegal drugs. It can be money, pride, power, sex or the seemingly natural high from adrenalin by driving fast, hang-gliding or bungie jumping. Religion can even be an addiction. Anything that keeps us from doing what we need to do to care for our responsibilities is an addiction.

When it comes to prevention, parents need to start early. We need to take our children to hospitals, prisons or bad parts of the country to show them what drugs can do. Ninety-five percent of the people in prison are in there for some kind of addiction-related crime. Even rape can be an addiction, since the rapist may get a rush from the control, power and violence of the act. We must teach self-control and love.

I write this as a past drug abuser who was full of hate for all authority. I was involved in the use of drugs to the point that I cast aside all family, rules, law and even myself.

I had to find out the hard way that I was looking for our Almighty Lord and Savior. I ended up with a 20-year sentence in prison.

I ask that all who read this pray for my continued growth in Christ, that I may be able to one day walk among you to take my knowledge to those still suffering in their addictions. *Wayne Woltman, Fort Supply, Okla.*

CGC MISREPRESENTED

I was pleased to receive the issue of *The Mennonite* on "The Mission of Higher Education" (Oct. 10) and applaud your attempt to keep the Mennonites of North America informed about their schools. I want to offer some corrections, however, to Aiden Schlichting Enns' article, where generalizations in the title, text and sidebars misrepresent the nature of Conrad Grebel College.

The second paragraph of the article stresses that "Canadian schools" do not tend to offer students opportunities "in the area of liberal arts and training for other professions." It may interest readers to know that the 2,800 undergraduates who enroll in courses at Conrad Grebel College each year have access to 141 degree-granting programs across six faculties. Their areas of study include accounting, architecture, biochemistry, engineering, classical studies, drama, environmental science, gerontology, kinesiology, music, urban planning and more.

In the sidebar on page 8, Conrad Grebel College is listed as offering "no undergraduate degrees." Taken out of context, this comment seems to suggest that students at Grebel are not in degree programs. Of course they are. Their degrees, however, are offered by the University of Waterloo, which has been, for the third year in succession, cited in *Maclean's* annual ranking of Canadian universities as, by reputation, the best university in Canada.

I appreciate that Aiden Schlichting Enns was allowed too little space to be able to convey a nuanced picture, but I want your readers—especially any prospective students—to know that Conrad Grebel College is a Canadian Mennonite school where outstanding students do earn degrees (offered by the finest university in Canada) in a greater range of programs than any other Mennonite college in North America. *Hildi Froese Tiessen, Interim President, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.*

We welcome your letters.

Bible

A rearview glimpse of the future

A study of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Jacob W. Elias

When life's circumstances seem to go against you, which way do you turn? Do you look up to God in heaven? Within for inner strength? Around for supportive friends? Ahead for divine rescue?

In Paul's first letter to the church at Thessalonica we see that this group is experiencing distress. They are grieving the unexpected deaths of some of their members.

Paul invites these first-century Christians to look ahead. Their deliverance will come in the future. Paul reassures this grieving community that a cosmic "Rescue 911" operation will soon unfold. The Lord will come from heaven to earth, and take charge by shouting commands. The graves will open and the dead in Christ will rise.

Paul has a direct word for those who will still be alive at that time, among whom he appears to include himself.

"Then we shall be snatched up!" he says. "We'll have a meeting with the Lord in the air. And we will have a reunion in the clouds with the believers who have been raised from the dead."

What do we as sophisticated and enlightened Mennonites do with this? Surely we cannot accept this "pie in the sky by and by" view of the future. Such escapist passages are best left to the writers of paperbacks on the end times, right?

Come to ancient Thessalonica, the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia. A fine natural harbor and a major east-west highway, both still in use today, linked this city with the rest of the Mediterranean world. Travelers to Thessalonica included artisans like Paul, who came to sell their goods.

Paul made tents, but he also shared the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result a church emerged.

The emergence of a group confessing Christ as Lord might not have attracted much attention, except for one thing. Thessalonica boasted a temple dedicated to Caesar.

The city officials in Thessalonica had a delicate balancing act to perform. Though they had been granted the right to govern themselves, they could not do so unless they maintained a cordial relationship with Rome. In exchange for their loyalty to Rome, cities like Thessalonica were guaranteed peace and security. "Peace and security" seems to have been an imperial slogan (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Revered as a god: It was politically expedient for the city and provincial officials in Thessalonica to support the building of a temple dedicated to Caesar. Here the citizens could do homage to former emperors, such as Caesar Augustus, who after his death was revered as a god. Through public ceremonies in and around this temple the citizens of Thessalonica could demonstrate their allegiance to the current emperor, Claudius Caesar (41-54 C.E.).

If the residents of Thessalonica came to these rallies and festivals the local officials could assure their benefactors in Rome, "Look, the citizens of Thessalonica are loyal to Caesar." To help identify dissidents, local officials likely also administered an oath of allegiance.

> ***We also look ahead to what God will still do. The archangel's call, the trumpet blast and the reunion in the clouds are all symbols of our hope.***

People who were unwilling for political or ideological reasons to swear allegiance were dealt with severely.

How do you think the Christians in Thessalonica responded? Having committed themselves in loyalty to another (cf. Acts 17:6), how could they comply?

The grief within the Christian community was likely occasioned by the deaths of some of their members who had been singled out for interrogation, who refused to swear alle-giance to Caesar. They paid with their lives.

Paul therefore urges the surviving believers in their shock and grief to look ahead. He gives them a rearview glimpse of the future. Victory has already been glimpsed. In their "rearview mirrors" the believers could see that in Jesus' death and resurrection God had given a foretaste and guarantee of ultimate victory. "We believe that Jesus died and rose again!" (4:14). Through the cross and the empty tomb Jesus has shown the way.

Jesus had also suffered, and he died because his witness concerning the kingdom of God sounded seditious. Some members of the church at Thessalonica also suffered, and some died because their allegiance to God's kingdom seemed treasonous.

Sustained by the death and resurrection of Christ, the believers were invited to keep in mind that the same God who raised Jesus will finally triumph over every power, including death. In their far vision, they were encouraged to anticipate a victory reunion in the clouds.

Which way, then, should we look for hope? Let us learn from Paul to look ahead. In our rearview mirror we see Jesus' cross and empty tomb. Jesus leads the way through suffering and death to triumph.

We also look ahead to what God will still do. The archangel's call, the trumpet blast and the reunion in the clouds are all symbols of our hope. Indeed God reigns. This view of the future can inspire our personal allegiance and our worship.

Jacob Elias teaches New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and is the author of 1 & 2 Thessalonians *(Herald Press, 1995) in the Believers Church Commentary Series.*

Profile

A house of many windows

A *tribute to* Ernst Harder, 1922-1995

Robert Kreider

Few cross the stage of life who have encountered such a richly varied range of experiences as Ernst Harder. He was a citizen of four nations, at home in four languages (Low German, High German, English and Spanish), who knew the highs and lows of life's journey, tragedy and triumph, joy and sadness.

The prophet Malachi speaks of the Lord of Hosts opening the windows of heaven and pouring down blessings. Ernst was a house of many windows. He also was a pilgrim like Abram and Sara, "who by faith ... set out, not knowing where they were going." Ernst traveled by faith through many lands, among many peoples, and wherever he went he was at home.

Ernst Harder was born Jan. 23, 1922, in the Molotschna Mennonite Colony in southern Ukraine. His family fled from the Ukraine in 1924 to Germany, where they lived for 11 years. In 1935 they moved to Paraguay, where Ernst graduated from high school in Filadelfia, Fernheim. In 1938, Ernst was the first young person to leave the colony and travel to the United States to study. He attended Freeman (S.D.) Academy and Bluffton (Ohio) College before graduating from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in 1945.

As a German national in the United States during World War II, his commitment to conscientious objection to war was challenged on numerous occasions, but because of his basic religious convictions he was allowed to continue his studies.

Post-graduate work included studies at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary, then in Chicago, at universities in both Heidelberg and Frankfurt am Main in Germany, at the University of Mexico and at Notre Dame University, South Bend, Ind.

On Aug. 23, 1946, Ernst married Ruth Ewert in the Johannestal Mennonite Church north of Hillsboro, Kan. They welcomed six children into their family. Four survive: two daughters, Trudy and Margaret; two sons, Richard and Robert. Two sons preceded Ernst in death: Karl on April 7, 1954, and Ronald on Dec. 25, 1968. Ernst was "Opa" to eight grandchildren.

The church and its missions: Ernst was baptized as a 13-year-old in the Kaiserslautern Mennonite Church in Germany. When he left Paraguay to come to the United States to study, he felt that God was calling him to become a missionary among the Indians of the Chaco. After several years of studying and pastoral ministry, however, he was invited to accept a teaching position at the Mennonite seminary in Montevideo, Uruguay. Throughout his life, Ernst had a warm spot in his heart for the church and its missions, both here in the United States and around the world.

Positive, yielded, hopeful: *Ernst Harder*

Ernst and Ruth spent 3 1/2 years in Paraguay resettling Mennonite refugees and helped found a Mennonite Church in Asuncion, Paraguay (1944-49). Upon their return to North America, Ernst pastored the Pulaski (Iowa) Mennonite Church (1951-54) and worked as chaplain at the Bethel Deaconess Hospital in Newton, Kan. (1954-56). In 1956 the Harders accepted a two-year term with Mennonite Central Committee in Frankfurt, Germany. Starting in 1958, Ernst taught Mennonite history and ethics and was later named president of the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Montevideo, Uruguay. He was also the General Conference representative to the South American churches from 1958 to 1968.

In 1975 the family relocated to Kansas, where Ernst was pastor of the Lehigh Mennonite Church (1976-77), visitation pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church (1977-79), and professor of peace studies at Bethel College (1978). In 1979 Ernst was called to pastor the Dallas (Texas) Mennonite Fellowship (now Peace Mennonite Church) 1979-1985. In 1985 he accepted the position of program manager for mediation at the Dallas County Juvenile Department working with young offenders in conflict resolution, and in that way making a difference in the juvenile justice system. In 1992 the Harders retired in North Newton.

In December 1994, Ernst was diagnosed with a cancerous tumor in his stomach. He struggled through two operations and several months of chemotherapy. This past summer he was well enough to travel to a family reunion in Manitoba and to visit Dallas. His condition worsened after the second operation in early September, and he died at his home in the care of his family on Oct. 25.

This last year Ernst struggled with the imponderables and mysteries of health and illness, life and death, time and eternity—ever positive, yielded, trusting, appreciative, hopeful. Hope, like a golden thread, ran through his life. Ernst's house is a house of many windows—windows for us, looking in, and windows for Ernst, looking out.

Ernst used to sit on the deck of his home, warmed by the sunshine of an autumn afternoon. Prompted at times by Ruth with a word or a name, Ernst told stories from his life, interweaving threads of the Anabaptist-Mennonite story he knew and loved so well.

In his travels among churches he had a singular way of sharing his story, the story of his Mennonite people, gathering up the new stories of an expanded peoplehood and braiding all these together with the Christ story—the story of Jesus, whom he first knew in the home of refugee parents in flight. This Christ was at his side to his last days, when he was a beloved pastor, mediator, husband, father, grandfather, friend and pilgrim on a journey of faith—he of the lineage of Abram and Sara.

Robert Kreider lives in North Newton, Kan.

AMBS window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Focus

The blessing of experience

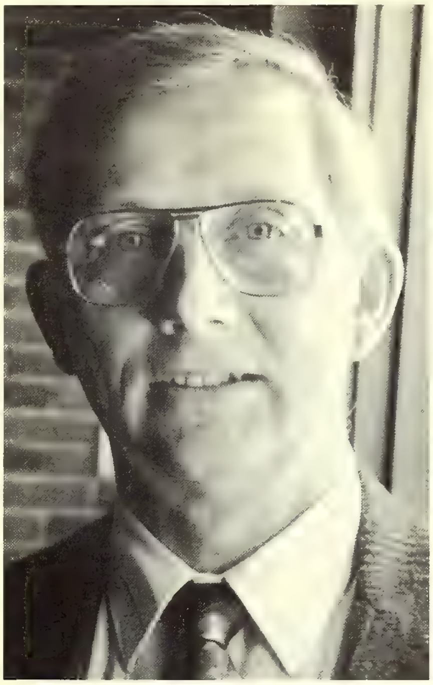
by Erick J. Sawatzky

At AMBS we take seriously the adage, "Experience is the best teacher." We have built practical experience into the very heart of the academic curriculum.

AMBS has always taught the practical skills of preaching, teaching, and counseling. What's new is **requiring students who would be pastors to actually experience something of pastoral ministry.**

We observed for years that students who experienced pastoral ministry brought different questions to classroom discussions. Students with experience seemed better able to bridge the world of ideas and real life situations. Students with experience had a better sense of what it meant to **be** a pastor as well as do pastoral tasks. And these changes happened even with relatively short experiences as a pastor.

As a result of these observations, AMBS chose to include in the Master of Divinity curriculum a requirement for pastoral experience. Students who plan to be pastors spend some time as student pastors in a congregation under the supervision of the congregation's pastor and their professor. The goals are: 1) to experience personal and spiritual growth; 2) to learn the arts and skills of ministry; and 3) to learn to recognize and meet God in the encounters of ministry. Each student spends ten hours a week in a congregation over two semesters leading worship, preaching, pastoral visitation, and teaching—encountering as broad a range of ministry experiences as possible. In addition each student spends another eleven weeks in full-time ministry.



Howard Zehr

What has begun to emerge is very encouraging and important. Students are not only learning that pastoral ministry is a lot of work, they are becoming aware that pastoral ministry is academic work, relational work, emotional work, and spiritual work all in one. They are becoming aware that members of a congregation relate to them differently and expect new responses from them. They are learning that God works in new and mysterious and wonderful ways in people's lives and that pastors are indeed privileged to hear about these things. They are frequently overwhelmed by all there is to do and to learn and to prepare for with so little time to do it. They experience the generosity and the grace and the loving care of the church along with the less seemly aspects. They experience successes and failures but invariably come away with a clearer sense of their ministry gifts, a more developed sense of pastoral identity, and a stronger sense of their call.

There is much that can and must be learned in the classroom and the library. The Bible, the history of the church, and the development of Christian thinking is not quickly learned and appreciated in a few survey courses. It takes careful reflection and deep thought.

Ours is a changing and complex world. People have many questions and difficult decisions to make. The church has a role and challenge as great as it has ever had. The church needs well prepared leaders. By combining the classroom, the library, and professors **with** experience in the congregation we have a rich mix for education and learning and we are partners with each other in ministry.

Erick J. Sawatzky, D.Min., is director of field education and associate professor of pastoral ministry at AMBS.

Inside

Combining study and experience to prepare for ministry

AMBS installs new dean

Summer mission institute

Combining study and experience to prepare for ministry

An internship ... a practicum ... a course called "Minister in the Church: at AMBS we use several names but each means one core concept— ***experience in ministry is an essential part of study in any degree program.***

Developing the soul of a pastor

"I wanted to work not so much at skills, but at developing the soul of a pastor," John Troyer says of his summer internship. He spent three months as a full-time intern at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, rural Goshen, Ind., working with pastor Ron Diener.

Gordon Janzen

Summer interns Eric Buller, John Troyer, and Melanie Zuercher recently shared their epxeriences at a weekly Forum. Eric served in the First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, Neb. as a pastoral intern; John in Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.; and Melanie Zuercher in the communications office of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

John's first goal was to learn how to step into a congregation and develop relationships—"learn to know people, learn to respect them and have them respect me." Although John is a native of Goshen, he had previously been involved with Clinton Frame Mennonite Church and the Pleasant View congregation was new to him.

What he wanted to experience was "coming to relationships without an 'agenda' first," and he said, "I experienced that in a more dramatic way than I have before."

A second goal was helping people in the congregation learn what their ministries are as lay people. So one of his efforts was developing and leading a training program for leaders of small groups.

Visitation was another goal that John worked at and through the summer started to feel more comfortable with this aspect of pastoral ministry.

"In a classroom, your intellect is formed, but the formation of character happens on the job—in the experience of being a pastor," John reflected. But it was the two experiences working together that helped him the most. "My internship experience would have been much different without my classroom experience as background. I had a lot of tools that were helpful and I had ways of making sense of things."

John is working toward completing a Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree at the end of January interterm. He hopes then to find a pastoral ministry assignment.

Summer "vacation" with a twist

For several AMBS students, the question, "What did you do on your summer vacation?" has a twist. Rather than earning money or working in a congregation, these students did unusual summer internships.

Mim Burkholder volunteered in the Elkhart County Women's Shelter, whose clientele comprises women and children seeking refuge from an abusive spouse, partner, or relative.

Mim, a student in the Master of Arts: Peace Studies program, did whatever was needed, including watching children, participating in group sessions with the women, and listening to stories. "I wasn't doing therapy, just providing support, because the shelter is essentially about women making their own choices."

The impact of this internship upon her academic peace studies has been significant. "I'm less idealistic," Burkholder says. "This puts other faces in my studies. Peace studies tends to be focused more on national and international issues rather than down-home and personal issues, like domestic violence.

"I'm thinking now that peace studies [focus on] fear and those we call enemies—about those we are living with and are afraid of," she says.

Melanie Zuercher, a Master of Divinity: Theological Studies student, worked as an intern in the communications office of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. Her primary responsibility was to edit *The Wayfarer* , the daily newssheet for Wichita '95.

"I am interested in church administration using my writing and editing skills, " she says. "And because my entire Mennonite experience has been with the Mennonite Church, I wanted to experience a distinctly General Conference environment."

For Ruth Johnston, a Master of Arts: Theology and Ethics student, summer studies took her into the inner core of Chicago. "Theology and ethics aren't really worked out in the classroom but in the midst of experience," she says. *(For more about Johnston's reflections, see page 3.)*

- June Mears

Finding God in the city

Ruth Johnston, AMBS student from Iowa City, Iowa, spent seven weeks during summer 1995 in Chicago, in a program sponsored by seven Chicago seminaries. In addition to classroom work, participants spent 20 hours a week in a ministry practicum. Ruth shared some reflections in a chapel service; following are excerpts.

Early in spring I felt a call to participate in the Women, Ministry and the City program. The call made sense; this program held the promise of exploring avenues I was interested in, primarily theology and ministry from a nontraditional perspective.

But, I was scared. Having grown up on an Iowa farm, I wondered how I could survive living and even doing ministry in the inner city. I prayed to God that I wasn't doing this alone.

In spite of my fears, I found that the city is not just the evil place or the vacation land that I had always thought. It's a place where people strive to live productive lives just as I do. I began to be more aware of my own attitudes which are fed primarily by the media. One of the most effective ways of lessening my fears was cultivating relationships with the good people I met at Englewood Mennonite Church. Soon it was not just me and God entering the Englewood community all alone, but me entering in anticipation of meeting the caring congregational members and God who preceded all of us.

I learned about privilege, primarily the privilege I have because I am white. I learned we cannot afford to lose sight of the fact that we have privilege—because of being white, or young, or male, or middle class or without physical or mental handicaps—and with that privilege comes power, which can be used to either help liberate or oppress others. We are all called to freedom rather than bondage in Christ, and we are held accountable for binding others. We are called put ourselves on the line for those who do not share our unmerited power.

I also learned about a wonderful congregation called Englewood Mennonite Church. The congregation has seen hard times in the past few years and in some ways they are buffeted from all sides, yet they still exist. They do more than exist, they welcome terrified, inexperienced interns like me with open arms, they hold two-hour worship services with ecstatic and spontaneous singing and praying, they study the Bible diligently, they struggle to provide new forms of outreach, they care for each other and exhibit in a profound way the tenderness of Christ.

It was said by the congregation that this summer intern was a sign from God, that in the midst of their struggles, God had not forgotten them. Indeed God has not forgotten them. God was there before I arrived and after I left and continues to remain faithful not only in their lives, but in mine.

God brought me into a new loving community this summer in—of all the unexpected places—the inner city of Chicago, and God brought them someone new to love and disciple. Thanks be to God.

Willard Swartley installed as dean

Encouraging listeners to greater knowledge and love of God, Willard Swartley was installed as dean of AMBS on Oct. 20.

"Our goal is to understand God more truly...to seek to know the love of Jesus Christ, not apart from knowledge, but that surpasses knowledge," Willard said in his address.

This knowledge and love then calls Christians to action: "Every teacher—and every pastor—must have a passion to build up the church in love. That's a goal of all believers, but we, as a seminary, are to lead in this journey and this task."

Willard became dean on Feb. 1, five months ahead of schedule to allow the former dean, Gayle Gerber Koontz, to assume the role of acting president. His installation coincided with the fall meeting of the AMBS board.

Willard has taught at AMBS since 1978, serving also during segments of this time as director of the Institute of Mennonite Studies, director of summer school, and acting dean.

Willard's teaching has not been limited to the classroom, however. Publications he has written and edited have been teaching tools for many. These include *Mark: The Way for all Nations, The Meaning of Peace,* and *Israel's Scripture Tradition and the Synoptic Gospels: Story Shaping Story.*

Willard was ordained in the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference in 1961 and served as a pastor from 1961-1964. Now as a seminary professor, Willard has said, "Preparing people for ministry is the most important thing I can think of to do in life."

Mary E. Klassen

Willard Swartley received a pottery pitcher from acting president Gerald Gerbandt during the service of installation October 20. Miriam Book, representing the Mennonite Church, complimented Swartley's church outreach and called his installation "a holy and key moment" for the seminary, its Elkhart neighborhood, and beyond. John Esau, representing the General Conference Mennonite Church, commended virtues of "character and competence, in that order," for the post, and noted that Swartley meets the requirement.

President's Window

I well remember the debate from my seminary days. One side argued that academics were most important; after all, how could you pastor a congregation if you didn't know the Bible, our Mennonite past, or the foundations and logic of non-violence? The other side emphasized practical pastoral skills; biblical knowledge and theology isn't very helpful, the argument went, if you didn't know how to preach, or to counsel, or to relate to people.

It seems obvious now that effective church leaders need academic preparation **and** pastoral skills. In our current curriculum we recognize the need for both, and that both must be taught in the classroom as well as in supervised experiences. (See "The blessing of experience" on page 1).

But we are also realizing that even the combination of knowledge and skills is not enough. So we nurture a pastoral identity in students and emphasize the call to pastoral ministry.

The last chapter of John describes one of Jesus' last meetings with his disciples. There, on the beach, Jesus three times asks Peter, "Do you love me?" Each time Peter responds in the affirmative, and each time Jesus continues, "Feed my sheep." Here was Peter's call to leadership, and the basic question was, "Do you love me?"

Regardless of the academic training, or practical skills, or supervised experience that AMBS graduates have, they will not be effective pastors unless they have love. This love is first of all directed toward Christ himself. Leaders of the church must have fallen in love with Christ.

But the call to love goes further. Pastors also must love the church, especially that part of the church they are leading. They must echo the words of Menno Simons in a letter to his brother-in-law: "For there is nothing upon earth which my heart loves more than it does the church."

They also must love the world as God loved the world (John 3:16). If our students have such love, and blend it with the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom and in congregations, they truly will be the kind of pastors God is calling them to be. *-Gerald Gerbrandt*

Summer at AMBS features new Mission Institute

Summer School

June 3-14

Anabaptist Spirituality
C.J. Dyck
Religious and Psychological Assessment
Ruth Lesher
Isaiah
Ben Ollenburger

June 17-28

Revelation of John
Nelson Kraybill
Conflict, Communication, Conciliation (June 20-28)
John Paul Lederach
Celebrating the Christian Year
Marlene Kropf, Mary Oyer, June Alliman Yoder
Christian Life in a Post-Modern World
Harry Huebner

August 2-4

Conference on Church and Healing
(Tentative)
Resource people: Lawrence Yoder, Marcus Smucker, Willard Swartley, Marvin K. Yoder, Dr. Akutsu (healing ministry in Japan)

August 5-30

Hebrew Narrative: Ruth
Perry Yoder

Evangelism and Mission Institute

July 8-19

Urban Missions (in Chicago)
Gary Martin
The Rural Church: Leadership and Renewal (July 8-12)
Dean Linsenmeyer
Service and Development: Contribution to Mission
(July 15-21)
John A. Lapp, Nancy Heisey
Biblical Interpretation and Cultural Context
Robert Ramseyer and Willard Swartley

July 19-21

Mission Conference: "Partnership in Mission"
Peter Rempel, Ron Yoder, and Institute instructors

July 22-August 2

Church and Healing
Lawrence Yoder
Gospel and Western Culture
Wilbert Shenk
Expansion of Christianity in South Africa: Mission, Ideology and Justice
Gerald Pillay

For more information about any of these courses or to register, call the AMBS Director of Summer School, 1 + 800 964-2627.

AMBS Panorama

New campaign milestone

The AMBS Partners for Ministry comprehensive campaign reached the seven million dollar milestone at the end of September. The effort currently is focusing on involving congregations so that each member can feel a sense of participation in the work of the seminary, reports John Duerksen, Partners for Ministry director.

Spring weekend course

Perry Yoder and Mary Schertz team up to teach the spring weekend intensive course: ***Biblical Foundations of Peace and Justice.*** The class will meet Friday evenings and Saturday mornings and afternoons of four weekends: Feb. 23-24; March 22-23; April 12-13; and May 10-11.

Each semester AMBS schedules at least one course in weekend sessions to make it possible for people to conveniently travel to the campus to participate in courses.

Prayer request

Continue praying for the AMBS board and presidential search committee as they make important decisions during these months.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Gospel Herald, Mennonite Reporter, The Mennonite.

Fall 1995 *Printed in U.S.A.*

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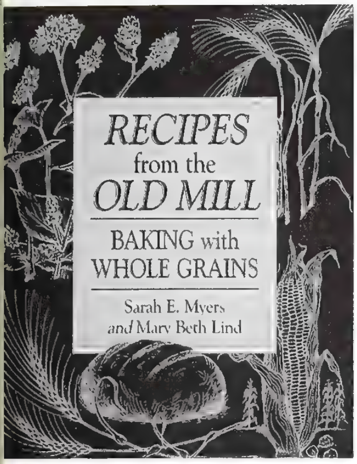
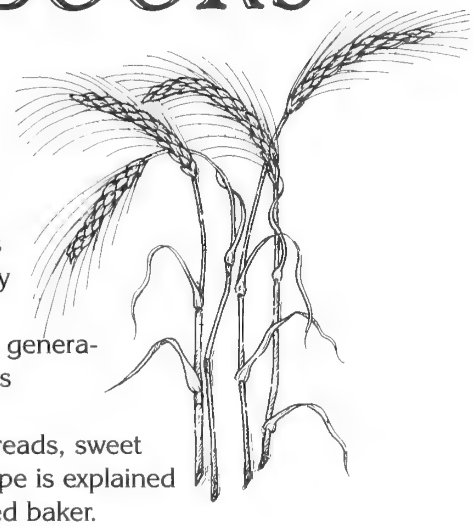

RECIPES from the OLD MILL
BAKING with WHOLE GRAINS
Sarah E. Myers and Mary Beth Lind

Recipes from the Old Mill: Baking with Whole Grains

by Sarah E. Myers and Mary Beth Lind



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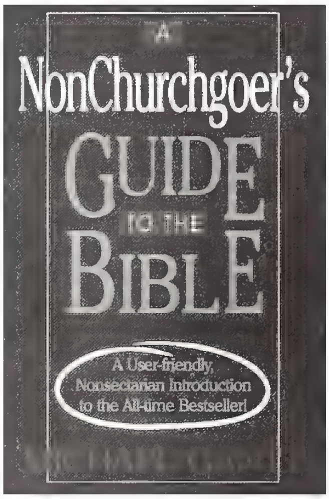
by Michael Gantt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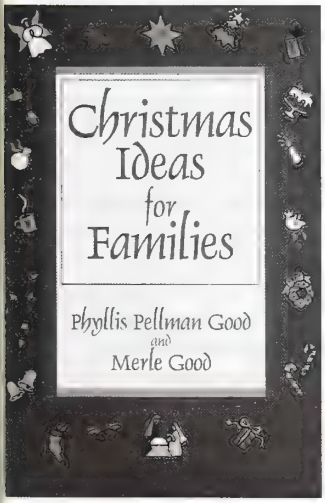
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News

A blood bank in Amarillo, Texas, rejected the blood of peace activists who were in town to commemorate the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Amarillo is home to Pantex, a nuclear weapons facility. The activists decided to give blood as a way of showing commitment to the Panhandle community. Coffee Memorial Blood Bank welcomed the donors, but turned them away when they found out the donors were activists. The activists were told the blood bank did not want to offend Pantex employees, who are major donors to the blood bank. (*The Nuclear Examiner*)

• • •

Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship is purchasing Menno House, the hospitality house that the church has managed for some time. In September the group made the decision to purchase. The house has hosted voluntary service workers, foreign clergy to the United Nations, church members in transition and many others. It also houses the church's office.

• • •

Canadians have become too dependent on government institutions and have gradually been losing their sense of responsibility for their own health and for members of the community, John W. Elias told participants of a national health-care consultation in Saskatoon Sept. 29. Elias, a consultant with the Saskatchewan Department of Health, called the church to take an active role in health care: "We ought to expose and confront vested interests and draw attention to those who are disadvantaged. As a faithful church we should speak for the unborn, for people who are disabled, disadvantaged, demoralized, frail and elderly, devalued or marginalized." The conference was sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Canada's Mental Health and Disabilities Program.

CPTers in Hebron assaulted again

Hebron, West Bank (CPT)—Israeli settlers assaulted a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams Nov. 4. Dianne Roe, age 53, of Corning, N.Y., was pushed to the ground and kicked in the back by several settler youth as she stood talking with two Palestinian teenage girls near Cordoba elementary school. The youth also attacked the girls, shoving, kicking and dragging one of them by her hair along the street.

The attack was the second assault on a CPTer in a month's time. On Sept. 30, Kathleen Kern, 33, of Webster, N.Y., was knocked to the ground by settlers, punched in the head and dragged along the street. When fellow CPTer Wendy Lehman, 24, of Kidron, Ohio, tried to help Kern, Lehman was also knocked down and kicked in the back and head. The CPTers are on assignment in the West Bank as peace advocates.

The Nov. 4 attack happened after a group of about 80 settlers blocked the road between the Israeli settlement of Beit Hadassah and Cordoba, a Palestinian girls' school. Because of the settlers, the children were scared to leave the school. Israeli military and police were attempting to calm the situation. CPTers have accompanied children to and from classes at the school since settlers injured both students and teachers there in mid-September and again Oct. 31.

Approximately 20 minutes after the incident, a settler armed with an Uzi threatened team members Roe, Lehman and Margaret Purchase, 69, of Grand Rapids, Mich. "You will pay a very high price if you help these Nazis," he said, gesturing toward the Palestinians. "This is my country, and any foreigner who comes to be with these Nazis will pay with their life."

"I've certainly learned a lot about the power of prayer and its interconnectedness with action," says Lehman. "Our work here involves risk, and we sometimes put ourselves in situations where we have only our faith in God, the power of nonviolence, each other and our Hebronite hosts to keep us safe. Without the prayer support of our friends back home, I'm not sure we could do it."

On the evening of Nov. 4, Israel's Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, was gunned down by a young Jewish extremist bent on destroying the peace process. Team members report that Hebron was quiet following the news. Hebron has been at the center of settler resistance to the peace process.

Christian Peacemaker Teams is a program of active peacemaking supported by Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations in North America.

COMMENTARY

Rabin's death highlights Israeli extremism

Chip Poston lives in East Jerusalem. He and his wife, Catherine Peck, work on peace-related issues in the West Bank with Mennonite Central Committee.

East Jerusalem (MCC)—When I opened the Sunday edition of *The Jerusalem Post* on Nov. 5 and saw the headline, "Rabin Assassinated," I thought the paper was a spoof published by an anti-peace group. Such a prank, unfortunately, would not have been out of character. Then I saw the headline of the Arabic daily *Al-Quds*, "Rabin Killed," and with utter shock realized that Israel's prime minister was dead.

At the "Yes to Peace—No to Violence" rally in Tel Aviv Nov. 4, the Israeli prime minister was reportedly elated at the enormous crowd, estimated at well over 100,000 people. The turnout, which exceeded even the organizers' expectations, was a solid affirmation of public support for Rabin's policies, even though the prime minister had increasingly been the target of ugly right-wing heckling during recent appearances.

But until the end, nobody seemed to believe that an Israeli would harm the prime minister.

"We have now entered a new era in which violence and even the murder of leaders … has been given legitimacy by certain extremist quarters," an unnamed police official said the next day.

Like the murder of 29 Palestinians in Hebron in February 1994 by extremist Israeli settler Baruch Goldstein, the assassination of Rabin underscores the extent to which Israel's extremist right is a threat to the peace process—one that equals or surpasses that of Palestinian extremists.

For many Palestinians, the Rabin assassination only deepens the sense of uncertainty that permeates their lives. "This was a very bad time for Rabin to die," said a friend of mine who is a businessman in Gaza. "If he had been killed two or three years ago it wouldn't have made much of a difference, but now he was our partner in the peace process."

Meanwhile, Israeli society has grown introspective as citizens reflect on the danger of disunity within the nation. On the day of Rabin's funeral, teachers in Israeli schools were instructed to discuss with students his contribution to the nation and the danger of political murder to Israeli democracy.

"We must do everything possible in

continued next page

Inside the news

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AMBS looks to cut budget, bolster programs / p. 17

Beating of Bolivian colony Mennonite prompts MCC responses / p. 17

Development and conflict management must go hand in hand

John Leckie (MCC)

Water wars: *A Salvadoran woman drinks from a community spigot. Development work like water projects can heal conflict or become another target in community battles.*

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Conflict resolution and development can be inextricably joined, say Mark Smith and Stacy Swain.

The couple recently completed a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in El Salvador.

"Without unity building, [development is] like making sand castles—everything crumbles," says Swain.

The couple learned how conflict can undermine development when they worked on a water project in the community of Patamera in 1992. Initially, fighting factions in the town worked together to dig trenches.

But a few months later, Smith says, he returned to a tense Patamera. Out of anger, people were to the point of cutting their neighbors' water lines. The project had forced former "enemies" to work together but had not addressed their animosities.

This year the couple began their fifth water project, this time in the town of Quipurito, an even more divisive community. This time the community worked at solving conflict as it worked at constructing a water system.

"The MCC team in El Salvador now sees all of its work in terms of conflict resolution, and water projects can be a great vehicle to resolving conflict," Smith says. *Emily Will*

German Mennonites spoke out on World War II at their annual meeting June 9-10 in Thomashof, Germany. Delegates passed a statement that read, in part, "At the end of the war many of us experienced this turning point as a catastrophe. Looking back, we acknowledge that the end of the war, in spite of all the suffering we had to undergo, was above all a liberation from a criminal regime of injustice. Most Mennonites in Germany ... [had] given in to the temptation of National Socialism and [had] abandoned the peace witness. They valued their obligation to their own people higher than the relation to our Mennonite sisters and brothers in the Netherlands and in the Elsasz (France). Dutch Mennonites, suffering under the German occupation and lamenting many victims of this regime, could not even count on the empathy, let alone the help, of German Mennonites. ... Mennonites of all occupations were entangled in the political system at that time and almost all Mennonites [were] silent in regard to the National Socialistic crimes against Jews and others. Also those who were critical of National Socialism did not see a way out. We ask for forgiveness, with the words of the Lord's Prayer." The statement calls German Mennonites to public witness in mission and peace, building of community, readiness to accept strangers and a style of living that preserves creation.

Thirty-five Bluffton (Ohio) College students, faculty and staff participated in a prayer vigil Nov. 1 near the site of the peace negotiations among Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. Bluffton president Elmer Neufeld, in an open letter in the *Dayton Daily News* to the presidents of the three countries, wrote, "We want you to know that the Bluffton College community, as a family deeply rooted in a faith expressed foremost in reconciliation and peace, compassion and service, is praying for the surprising, creative and refreshing intervention of God's Spirit in your discussions."

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Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has added a new major, Spanish. Assistant professor of Spanish Martha Peterka, who holds a doctoral degree in Spanish language and literature, will direct the program.

• • •

The Community Ministries program of Mennonite Central Committee U.S. may shift up to $67,000 from existing programs to create a new model of a service unit. The new unit will be placed in an urban area that includes various Mennonite congregations of diverse ethnic backgrounds. The unit will bring together two or three service workers from the community and two or three workers from the more traditional MCC constituency to create a multiethnic endeavor. Currently MCC U.S. has seven service units in which primarily white Mennonites serve in disenfranchised communities. It also sponsors summer service and an internship program geared toward leadership development of Mennonite youth from impoverished communities. The new unit would pull these two tracks into one.

order to stamp out violence and incitement and to teach ourselves the value of restraint, tolerance and self-control, even in the face of fierce ideological clashes," wrote Israel's minister of education in an open letter to students.

There has been considerable reflection on the relationship between hateful thought and treacherous deed. Over the past months the prime minister was regularly called a traitor by the Israeli right and was the target of abusive posters. One depicted him dressed as a Nazi S.S. officer. Yosef Lapid, an editorial writer for the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv*, called Rabin's assassination the "harvest of bitter fruits."

Rabin was a lifelong soldier who eventually came to recognize the limits of military power in Israel's conflict with the Palestinians. Having shifted his focus to diplomacy, he pursued it as aggressively as he had previously fought in battle.

During Rabin's funeral, King Hussein of Jordan spoke openly of his affection for Rabin, something which would have been unthinkable only two years ago. As Hussein reflected on the strangeness of "standing [at the podium] alone, where so often we have stood together," a young Israeli soldier behind the king began to weep. It was a transcendent moment that powerfully dramatized the irreversible changes the peace process has already wrought.

Western district joins worship and stewardship

North Newton, Kan.—The closing of a centennial fund drive made stewardship an apt theme for Western District Conference (WDC) Oct. 27-29. The drive with its $2 million goal brought in $1,445,489.

Funds from the drive went many places, including retiring the debt on the conference headquarters and making improvements to campgrounds near Murdock, Kan., and Hydro, Okla.

Conference speaker Lynn Miller's talks on stewardship went beyond dollars. He spoke of first-fruits giving as a whole-life response to God's love. "God is not giving us something small for our salvation," Miller said. "God wants your life, not your money."

Miller asked, "Why after God's extravagant love do we turn around and operate our financial lives as if they are battlefields in which we have to win?" He said stewardship starts with a heart dedicated to God and a willingness to put aside self-interest. "Christianity is not the icing on the cake of an American middle-class lifestyle," he said. "It's a whole other cake."

Accountability: Two proposed changes in WDC ministerial policy were intended to make Western District ministers more accountable to the conference. The first change is in effect, the second on hold. At preconference meetings, conference leaders told pastors about a new policy for pastoral self-review. The district is asking all WDC pastors to complete an annual self-review with another person of their choice. The review is to be filed at WDC offices.

The second proposed change was a constitutional revision that would have moved authority over ministers, particularly in the areas of ordination and licensing, from the congregation to the conference.

Clarence Rempel, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., questioned the proposed change. In the new wording he saw the conference "assuming authority over pastors" rather than "coming alongside the congregation to support the pastor." He called for "balance of authority or shared authority [between conference and congregation] in regard to pastors."

Taking the criticisms into account, WDC leadership opted not to ask for acceptance of constitutional revisions dealing with these issues. The ministerial committee will review feedback on the question of congregational vs. conference authority and may propose different changes in the future.

Delegates did pass the other constitutional revisions suggested by conference leadership and also amended the constitution's article of faith and purpose to include a reference supporting the new denominational Confession of Faith.

While conference income in 1994 only reached 83 percent of budget, the conference spent only 81 percent of its budget, ending the year with a surplus of $8,255. Delegates passed a 1996 budget of $470,338, a 2 percent increase over the 1994 budget.

The conference heard about new

"Christianity is not the icing on the cake of an American middle-class lifestyle."
Lynn Miller

church planting possibilities. Plans are in the works for a Hmong church plant in Arvada, Colo. Over 100 Hmong people have had gardens on land surrounding Arvada Mennonite Church since the church made the land available 12 years ago. WDC is helping fund ministerial studies for Pao Yang from the Hmong Mennonite Church in Fresno, Calif., at Hesston (Kan.) College and hopes to send him to Arvada to begin a church plant in 1997. The church plant will be a cooperative effort with the Rocky Mountain Conference of the Mennonite Church. Other possibilities for church planting are being studied in Dallas/Fort Worth.

In discussions about integration with the Rocky Mountain Conference and South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church, WDC moderator Delon Martens encouraged WDC congregations to explore the possibilities of forming a sister congregation relationship with an MC church. The WDC offices offered to provide assistance to help match churches.
Larry Penner

Seminary board tests budget cuts, new programs

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—Revamping degree programs and the budget were two key areas of discussion for the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary board meeting held here Oct. 19-21.

One significant area of discussion was budget planning for the 1996-97 year. In the June meeting, the board had asked for a cut of almost 8 percent for 1996-97. At this meeting they reviewed a proposal to meet this goal that includes cuts in a variety of areas rather than major cuts in a few areas. The board approved the plan in principle; details will be worked out in a proposed budget to the February 1996 meeting of the board.

The board also discussed new and revised academic programs. They approved a repackaging of the one-year Certificate in Theological Studies. The goal of the revisions is to make the program more flexible for people who want to test seminary studies or people who are preparing to combine pastoring with another vocation.

The board also approved strengthening the pastoral care and counseling concentration in the Master of Divinity program. The pastoral care and counseling concentration, which was included in the revised M.Div. curriculum launched a year ago, will now involve 3 1/2 or four years of study.

The board looked again at the creation of a Doctor of Ministry program, asking for a detailed plan of development with checkpoints along the way. They signaled their wish to have this program ready by the summer of 1998.
Mary E. Klassen

Mennonite beating in Bolivia raises questions for MCC

Winnipeg (MCCC)—The beating of an 18-year old man in a Mennonite colony in Bolivia is making headlines in Manitoba and across Canada.

Mennonite Central Committee workers in Bolivia and Canada have raised serious concerns about the beating, which was sanctioned by the Old Colony church leaders.

The story, which was reported by the *Winnipeg Free Press*, is about the beating of 18-year-old Paul Buhler of the Cupesi Colony near Santa Cruz. Buhler was punished because he was no longer willing to follow the rigid rules and traditional religious beliefs of the colony.

His father had asked other men in the village to assist with disciplining his son because he wanted his son to recant his confession of faith in the assurance of salvation. Traditional colony beliefs deny that one can be assured of salvation.

Abe Janzen, who directs MCC programs in Bolivia, says it is important to express concern about the beating. But at the same time he wants to keep doors open to the Mennonite colonies.

continued on page 18

First Mennonite Church, Burns, Kan., celebrated its 50th anniversary Nov. 5.

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Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan., celebrated its 120th anniversary Nov. 5.

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Pastors' Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., will be held Jan. 29-Feb. 1, 1996. The theme will be "Living from Abundance: Pastoring from a Stewardship Perspective." M. Douglas Meeks, author of *God the Economist* and academic dean of Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, will be the featured speaker. Registration deadline is Dec. 15. For more information, contact Bev Sawatzky, administrative secretary, or Janeen Bertsche Johnson, director of continuing education, at (219) 296-6207 or 1-800-964-2627.

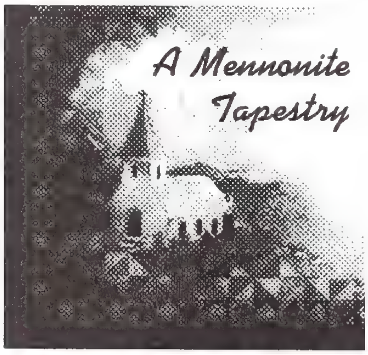
• • •

The Fellowship of Merry Christians has given its 1995 Scrooge Award to the Legal Department and Retail Support Department of the U.S. Postal Service in Washington for collaborating on a policy banning the words "Merry Christmas" and "Happy Hanukkah" from post office lobbies. The fellowship urges people to protest the ban by greeting all postal clerks and mail carriers with a hearty "Merry Christmas," and a "Happy Hanukkah" on Dec. 18. The fellowship awarded a "True Spirit of Christmas Present Award" to David Rupert, acting postmaster in Jackson, Wyo., and chaplain of the National League of Postmasters, for his efforts to lift the ban. In August the National League of Postmasters presented a petition signed by 280 postmasters throughout the country asking that the ban be lifted.

The Ebola virus epidemic that focused world attention on Kikwit, Zaire, is officially over, according to the World Health Organization. The virus killed 233. Sixty are known to have survived infection.

• • •

Thirty-three women and three men slipped through the ring of military encampments surrounding Sarajevo in the former Yugoslavia to attend the second "Through Heart to Peace" conference of Women of the World, held in May. Participants, ranging from ages 22 to 72, came from 10 countries. To enter Sarajevo they walked by night through seven miles of mud, water and sniper fire in order to show solidarity with those living under siege. After the conference they brought out with them a 13-year-old boy who had been sent to Sarajevo for an operation in 1992 and had been stranded there without his family. (*Gospel Herald*)



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Although Canadians and many others are horrified by the beating, Janzen says it is important to understand that Old Colony parents and church leaders strongly believe that traditions must be upheld.

"They raise their children so that they will conform into their world and not fit into the world around them," he explains. "This makes it difficult for [the children] to leave the colony to be tempted by outside attractions."

The man's father believed he had the right to discipline his son because Mennonite parents in Bolivia are legally responsible for their children until children reach age 21.

According to reports published in the Bolivian media, Buhler was taken by force from the home of his employer—an excommunicated member of another colony—tied up for 6 1/2 hours and beaten.

Torture? The beating, which was described as torture by the Bolivian media, was reported to the Bolivian police. No charges have been filed, but a lawyer has been hired to look into the matter on Buhler's behalf; Mennonites in western Canada are raising funds to help pay his legal costs.

Janzen says some members of the Mennonite community have criticized MCC for not being more critical of this and other incidents in the conservative Mennonite colonies in Latin America.

For Janzen, the issue is how MCC can continue the process of building relationships and trust that can lead to changes. Trying to impose change, he says, will only "close doors."

But former MCC Canada Kanadier Concerns director Abe Warkentin believes "conditions have deteriorated to a point where MCC has to work more aggressively toward bringing about changes in some Mennonite colonies."

Warkentin, who is the manager of *Die Mennonitische Post*, the German-language newspaper that serves Mennonites in Canada and Latin America, says, "I've heard thousands of cries for help."

He says the Mennonite migrations to Canada and the United States are examples of cries of help. "They don't all know how to ask for help—they express their needs with their feet."

Warkentin notes that 75 years ago MCC responded to the needs of Mennonites in the former Soviet Union. Today, he says, another "outpouring of help and love" is needed for Colony Mennonites. "And what better opportunity than this year to mark MCC's 75th anniversary.

"We have to be more innovative. We have to work at ways to help them. What is happening in some of our most conservative and isolated colonies is the greatest tragedy in Mennonite history," he says.

> **"What is happening in some of our most ... isolated colonies is the greatest tragedy in Mennonite history."**
>
> ***Abe Warkentin***

Warkentin says changes are desperately needed in four areas—a higher standard of education, genuine freedom of worship, positive social outlets for youth and emancipation of women.

MCC Canada executive director Marvin Frey says that the agency needs to find a way to criticize abuses but not alienate colony leaders.

He says there is a distinction between "sweeping something under the carpet" and finding a quiet, behind-the-scenes way to address the issues—especially when these incidents happen in other countries.

"We are guests. If we want to maintain a local presence we need to keep open our lines of communication."

He admits this approach is difficult for MCC workers who are close to the conflict.

"When our workers see abuses, they feel like anyone else. But they also know that a quieter response can often provide the solution to the problem," he says, acknowledging that this issue has opened a debate about the appropriate way for MCC to respond.

"We recognize there are differences of opinion," he says. "We want to allow that debate to occur."

MCC has been working in community development in Bolivia for 35 years. During the past 20 years MCCers have worked with Colony Mennonites in health education, informal education, documentation and agriculture projects. MCC Bolivia has five people now working full-time with Colony Mennonites. *Gladys Terichow and John Longhurst*

Record

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

DEATHS

Ernst Harder died Oct. 25 at age 73. He and his wife, Ruth, served with the Commission on Overseas Mission in Uruguay 1958-1975 as teacher and president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Montevideo. He was the first secretary for Hispanic ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries (1979-1982). He pastored several General Conference churches (see Profile, page 12). Harder was a member of Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan.

MINISTERS

Beverly Baumgartner is pastoral intern at Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kan.

Pearl Hoover will begin as pastor at Shalom Church, Newton, Kan., Jan. 1, 1996.

Benno A. Klassen has resigned as pastor at Zoar Church, Waldheim, Sask., after serving there 16 years. He will begin as pastor at Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask., early in 1996.

Jason Martin began as interim pastor at Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., Aug. 1.

Amanda Rempel was licensed Nov. 12 as chaplain for Kidron-Bethel Retirement Center, North Newton, Kan.

Debbie Schmidt was licensed for ministry at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., Oct. 22.

Royce Vogt was licensed for ministry at First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., Oct. 22.

David Whitermore will end as pastor at New Hope Church, Olathe, Kan., March 31, 1996.

WORKERS

Laura Braun, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, began a 22-month MVS term Aug. 28 as an administrative assistant with Global Response in Boulder, Colo.

Jennifer Burch, Rockville, Md., began a two-year MVS term Sept. 18 as program director for the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program in Boulder, Colo.

Laura Craik, Rosthern, Sask., began an eight-month MVS term Sept. 2 as an office assistant with Winnipeg Harvest.

Chad Ediger, Joy Church, Oklahoma City, began a two-year MVS term Sept. 15 as a community worker at Welcome Inn, Hamilton, Ont.

Kristen Epp, Salem-Zion Church, Marion, S.D., began a two-year MVS term Aug. 7 at the East Dallas (Texas) Community School, where she works with accounting and special projects.

Jeremy Hajdu, New Kensington, Pa., began an 18-month MVS term Sept. 23 with the Washington Toxic Coalition in Seattle.

Ken Hildebrand, Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, will begin a six-month internship with Eastern Mennonite Missions' School of Witness in January. He will be helping start an independent youth church in Winkler.

Morgen Jahnke, Wildwood Church, Saskatoon, began a two-year MVS

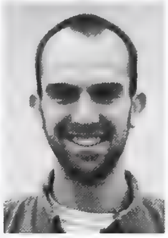
Braun

Burch

Craik

Ediger

Epp


Hajdu

Hildebrand

Jahnke

The Beirut Stock Exchange has reopened. The exchange had been closed since the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Government officials hope the exchange will attract $20 billion in private capital, much of it from Lebanese citizens living abroad. (*World Press Review*)

• • •

Stealing four cookies brought Kevin Thomas Weber a lifetime prison sentence in Orange County, Calif., Oct. 27. Orange County Superior Court Judge Jean Rheinheimer said she had no choice but to sentence Weber to a minimum of 26 years to life under the state's "three strikes" law. Weber, a homeless man, was previously convicted of assault with a deadly weapon. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

• • •

Lutheran World Federation has joined other nongovernmental organizations in calling for a comprehensive ban on landmines. So far the United Nations is only one-third of the way toward its goal of $75 million U.S. to clear landmines. But millions of new mines are put down each year. For every mine cleared, 20 to 50 more are planted. Each mine costs about $3 U.S. to place and costs $300 to $1,000 to remove.

• • •

Western District Conference has established a Congregational Development Fund to support evangelism, goal setting, conflict management, dealing with abuse, strengthening policy, rural church issues, spiritual retreats, women's concerns and worship issues. WDC plans to have 10 to 15 people trained in these issues available to the churches before the end of the year. For information contact Marvin Zehr or Floyd Bartel at WDC, P.O. Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117, (316) 283-6300.

term Sept. 11 as a peace worker with Project Peacemakers in Winnipeg.

Melissa Kelly, Budd Lake, N.J., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 23 as a teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Marie Klassen, Douglas Church, Winnipeg, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 as an assistant teacher at the Friendship Day Care in Hutchinson, Kan.

Tricia Deanne Loewen, North Kildonan Church, Winnipeg, is serving a six-month MCC Canada term as a Service Education Program intern in Salt, Jordan, at the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf.

Kira Olfert, Superb Church, Kerrobert, Sask., began a two-year MVS term Aug. 16 as a teacher's aide at the Friendship Day Care and as cashier/clerk at the Et Cetera Shop in Hutchinson, Kan.

Rosemary Reimer, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., is half-time administrative assistant for MVS. She replaces **Lisa Schmidt**.

Linda Rempel, Chilliwack, B.C., began a two-year MVS term Aug. 24 as an assistant teacher at the Our Place Day Care in Seattle.

Jill Russell, Orillia, Ont., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 18 as an assistant case manager at Hope House in San Francisco.

Kerrin Short, Zion Church, Archbold, Ohio, began a two-year MVS term Aug. 6 as a teacher at the East Dallas (Texas) Community School.

Coralee Stucky, Kingman, Kan., began a one-year MVS term May 5 as a grant writer and fund-raiser for Habitat for Humanity in Denver.

Timothy Williams, Markham (Ill.) Community Church, served a summer MCC term at the church as a community service agent.

Greg Yoder, Park View Church, Harrisonburg, Va., began a one-year MVS term Oct. 1 as a program assistant with the Boys and Girls Clubs in Fresno, Calif.

Kelly

M. Klassen

Loewen

Olfert

L. Rempel

Russell

Short

Stucky

Yoder

Single urgently needed for one-year VS position as **assistant host or hostess** at the **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference. Duties include day-to-day operation of bed and breakfast-type guest house and providing a "home away from home" for international travelers.

For information contact **Annabelle Kratz, 13495 Brighton Dam Road, Clarksville, MD 21029; (301) 596-9057.**

Faculty position in nursing: Full-time, beginning fall 1996. Doctorate preferred; master's degree in medical-surgical nursing required. Education and experience related to medical-surgical nursing and/or critical care necessary. Multiethnic people are encouraged to apply. Application deadline: **Dec. 15.**

Send letter of application and resume to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.** EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant.

Goshen College announces a two-year half-time position in the **history department**, beginning August 1996. Responsibilities include teaching introductory World Civilization and European Civilization and two upper-level courses each year in world or European history. Ph.D. preferred, master's required, in European or world history. Teaching experience expected. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Contact **John D. Nyce, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Goshen College announces a tenure-track opening for a **generalist in English** to teach general education composition and literature (lower level) and great books (upper level), preferably with one or more of these specializations: British literature 1850 to the present, contemporary fiction and poetry, creative writing. Ph.D. required. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send dossier, transcripts and statement of teaching philosophy **by Feb. 15, 1996,** to **John D. Nyce, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

When making your will consider the General Conference Mennonite Church as a beneficiary. Call for a free booklet to aid in collecting information for your attorney.

Telephone **Gary Franz at (316) 283-5100** or write **GCMC, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Mennonite Mutual Aid is seeking a **programmer/analyst** to analyze, design, develop and/or purchase business software for our AS/400 and PC-LAN environment. The right person for this position will have or will be completing a bachelor's degree in an area such as management information systems, business, finance, accounting, computer science, mathematics, etc. This person will also possess strong skills in such areas as working with people, communications, planning, organizing and leadership potential. Two to five years of related experience is preferred. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. The interview process will include an aptitude test. MMA offers an excellent working environment and a competitive benefit package.

Send resume to: **MMA, Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527.**

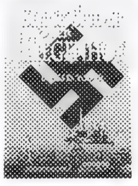
Bluffton College announces a full-time, tenure-track faculty position as **assistant/associate professor of psychology** beginning fall 1996. Ph.D. (master's considered); psychology generalist with ability to teach in several areas of psychology; evidence or promise of teaching excellence is essential. Interdisciplinary teaching competencies will be viewed favorably. Graduate teaching experience and/or interest in teaching in an education master's program will be a plus. The successful candidate will teach courses in introductory psychology, and at least three of the following: psychology of learning, cognitive processes, abnormal psychology, personality, therapeutic psychology and biological psychology.

Consideration of applications begins Jan. 15, 1996, and continues until an appointment is made. Send letter of interest and resume or vita to **Amy M. Tabler, Assistant to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196.** Equal opportunity employer

Stories of Hope

Black Spider Over Tiegenhof

by **James D. Yoder**



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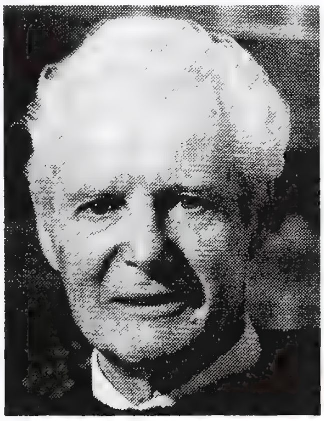

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Reviews

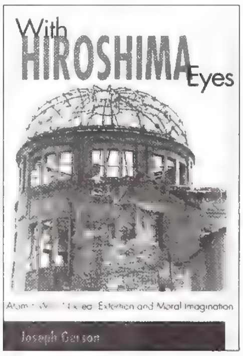
BOOKS

MEANING OF THE A-BOMB

With Hiroshima Eyes: Atomic War, Nuclear Extortion and Moral Imagination *by Joseph Gerson (New Society Publishers, 1995, 203 pages)*

Reviewed by John K. Stoner, Akron, Pa.

What can we do to observe the 50th anniversary of the homicidal destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Read a book? Randall Forsberg, tireless peace worker and disarmament advocate says, "If you buy one book on the 50th anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, choose *With Hiroshima Eyes.*"



Gerson quotes an anonymous "hibakusha" (atomic bomb victim/survivor) describing her handicapped child:

"I was 20 years old, 900 meters from the center of the explosion, when the A-bomb fell. I miraculously survived those flames of hell. I was married and three months pregnant then. The fetus was a victim of the A-bomb before she was born. When I was told she was a victim of the A-bomb, I ... was driven to despair. The only relief was that she was a gentle, cheerful girl. My husband died in 1983, anxious about his daughter.

" We have ... an association of prenatal hibakusha. ... It was said in those days that they would not live to be older than 10 years, but they have now lived for more than 40 years, living without the opportunity to have an ordinary human life. It seems to me that they tell us, even without words, of the horror of nuclear weapons and of the importance of living a life worthy of human beings."

Gerson, a Jew, asks, "To what extent should Michiko Yamaoka's memories and suffering be differentiated from those of Primo Levi, Elie Wiesel and other survivors of the European Judeocide? How do we differentiate the moral and political culpabilities of Hitler and Eichmann from those of Truman and Conant (the president of Harvard University who recommended the targets of the atomic bomb be vital war plants, closely surrounded by workers' homes)? What do these coexisting realities tell us about the nature of our society and the moral and spiritual responsibilities we face?"

Joseph Gerson speaks of America as an empire, and says that since 1945 the chief instrument of U.S. foreign policy has been "nuclear extortion" by means of "atomic diplomacy." He produces massive evidence from the lips of national leaders over the past five decades to prove that what is called the American national interest is a euphemism for empire. This is not what Americans want to hear.

Three chapters of the book are devoted to the role of nuclear extortion in the 1962 missile crisis, the Vietnam War and the 1991 Persian Gulf slaughter. (A Greek philosopher said that the first rule of good government is to call everything by its right name.) It is sobering, to say the least, to see how close we have come in these events to nuclear war and to realize how coldly national leaders can contemplate the incineration of creation.

The book is a call to action for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Gerson says that when he began working for nuclear disarmament in the mid-1970s he "assumed like most people that the complete elimination of nuclear weapons was a utopian dream. I had been socialized to believe that abolition was either beyond the power of popular movements or technically impossible." But the hibakusha, scientists and others have convinced him. Change is possible.

GOD AND BIOLOGY

On Behalf of God: A Christian Ethic for Biology *by Bruce R. Reichenbach and V. Elving Anderson (Eerdmans, 1995, 355 pages)*

Reviewed by C. Franklin Bishop, professor emeritus of biology, Goshen, Ind.

On Behalf of God is a well-reasoned treatment of some complex bioethical issues. The authors do not apologize for their Christian bias but neatly articulate the biblical paradigm that underlies their views.

Chapter 3, "A Christian Ethic of Stewardship," characterizes the roles of "filling," subduing" and "caring for" as defined stewardship functions for humans. However, such functions

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are to be carried out as active responsibilities, not merely as passive caretaking.

Along with stewardship of the environment, the authors apply the stewardship role to other concerns raised by biology, including assisted reproduction in humans. Readers will find the chapter "Brains, Genes and Moral Responsibility," as well as the concluding chapter dealing with "Stewardship and Human Sexuality," particularly intriguing and controversial.

While a good background in both biology and philosophy would enhance one's appreciation of the book, the average layperson will not feel like an outsider.

I commend this book to professional and layperson alike. The authors do not give simplistic solutions to such complex issues. But they offer rich rewards to the thoughtful readers of this treatment of a very complicated world.

HOW TO PLAN A LIVING TRUST

The Christian's Guide to Designing a Loving Trust Plan *by Robert A. Esperti and Renno L. Peterson (Zondervan, 1995, 287 pages)*

Reviewed by J.B. Miller, vice president of financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind.

A great deal has been written about living trusts and the role they play in good estate planning. One of the better books available is *The Christian's Guide to Designing a Loving Trust Plan* by Robert A. Esperti and Renno L. Peterson. Originally published in 1988 and now in a revised edition targeted at the Christian market, the book provides helpful concepts for people interested in estate planning that go beyond the use of wills.

Since the book's first edition was targeted to the secular market, it has been expanded to include such chapters as "Put Love in Your Giving" and "How to Give to Charity," both of which have a scriptural basis for estate planning.

While the book is readable, it is not the type of book that is read in one sitting. Rather, it should be used to become acquainted with living trusts, particularly when someone suggests that living trusts will cure all your estate planning needs. They won't, but properly executed trusts can save significant estate tax dollars as well as make estate settlement easier and more timely.

One part of the book that should be required reading for anyone contemplating establishing living trusts is the introduction to the second edition. The authors outline the dangers of buying boiler-plate living trust forms that leave the purchaser with the belief that estate planning has taken place because they have a living trust. A poorly drafted will can spell disaster. A bad living trust is often even more problematic. The authors emphasize the need for professional assistance in estate planning that might include attorneys, accountants and certified financial planners, but certainly someone more than a salesperson selling mass generated living trusts.

As noted in the book, "Estate planning is not death planning. It is an act of love for those we love!" Proper estate planning is necessary if we really do love our families and the charitable organizations among us. This book will help sort out how trusts can assist in this planning process.

Resources

- **Christmas Ideas for Families** by Phyllis Pellman Good and Merle Good (Good Books, 1995, $9.95 U.S.) offers ways for families to be together and begin new traditions.
- **Youth Discovery Team musical recordings** are available. The YDT Colombia team recording features Latin American music, the YDT Zambia team features Southern Africa-style music. Cost for cassette or CD is $6 U.S./$7 Cdn. Additional contributions are welcome. Order from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151; or from MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381.
- **1996 Calendar for Peace**, featuring black and white photography by Carolyn Prieb and youth of East Chicago, is available for $10 U.S. from Carolyn Prieb, Youth Photography Project, Box 3293, East Chicago, IN 46312. Proceeds benefit the Youth Photography Project.
- **Mediating the Victim-Offender Conflict**, a booklet that gives an overview for the victim-offender reconciliation program, is now available in Spanish. Available for $.40 U.S./$.50 Cdn. from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; (717) 859-1151; or MCC B.C., Box 2038, Clearbrook, BC V2T 3T8; (604) 850-6639. Also, **Restorative Justice: Making Things Right**, a 22-minute video, is available in Spanish. Available for free loan from MCC Akron or from your local MCC office.
- **Turning Toward Jesus** is a video curriculum for new believers that addresses their questions and assumptions about the Christian life. The set includes 4 videos and an instructor's notebook with reproducible student study sheets. Order from MBM Media Ministries, 1-800-999-3534; $149.95 U.S./$208.95 Cdn.
- **Bridging Troubled Waters: The Mennonite Brethren at Mid-Twentieth Century**, edited by Paul Toews (Kindred Productions, 1995) includes essays by Mennonite Brethren scholars and biographies of David Ewert, Waldo Hiebert and J.B. Toews.
- **Global Gods** by David W. Shenk (Herald Press, 1995, $16.95 U.S./$24.25 Cdn.) explores 10 religions or ideologies including Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam and Marxism in the spirit of interfaith dialogue.
- **And a Time to Die** by Frances Bontrager Greaser (Herald Press, 1995, $9.95 U.S./$14.20 Cdn.) tells the author's experience of having a son with AIDS. Includes advice for caregivers.
- **Expanding the Circle of Caring: Ministering to the Family Members of Perpetrators and Victims of Sexual Abuse** ($5 U.S./$7 Cdn.) is a booklet that helps churches promote understanding and compassion for families. To order call MCC Akron, (717) 859-1151, MCC Canada, (204) 261-6381 or MCC Ontario, (519) 745-8458.
- **A resource packet on abortion** is available from Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries ($4 U.S./$5 Cdn.). U.S. packets can be ordered from MCC Akron, (717) 859-1151; Canadian packets from MCC Canada, (204) 261-6381.

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Editorial

Speak softly

Our words count. We let a harsh word slip from our tongue. We want to retract what we said, but it is too late; the damage is done. We speak or write without thinking, without weighing the effect of our words, or we deny them the weight they carry, and before we know it, hurt or discord have begun spreading like ripples.

Like fish in water, we swim in language without paying it any attention, wrote S.I. Hayakawa. We too often ignore what we say, what we write or what we communicate with our gestures or our glances.

Jesus warned the Pharisees, "On the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter" (Matthew 12:36). James called the tongue "a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God" (James 3:8b-9).

> *To give a soft answer in the face of wrath is not easily done or quickly learned. It takes practice and comes from waiting in silence.*

After the Oklahoma City bombing and now with the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, we are in the midst of a debate about the effect of speech on actions. Specifically, does hostile speech lead to hostile actions?

After the Oklahoma City bombing the media looked anew at talk radio, which is sometimes hate radio. Now Israeli authorities are looking at the effect of hate speech against Rabin on the man who pulled the trigger to kill him.

Under the protection of free speech, people from G. Gordon Liddy to Ice T foment hatred. Should they be held responsible when someone shoots a federal agent or kills a police officer? Not necessarily. Is there a connection between an atmosphere of hateful speech and hostile actions? Yes.

"Hate," writes Frederick Buechner, "is as all-absorbing as love, as irrational, and in its own way as satisfying." The major difference, he writes, is that "lovers, by losing themselves in their loving, find themselves, become themselves. Haters simply lose themselves. Theirs is the ultimately *consuming* passion."

Violent acts: Hatred may begin from a hurt and the desire to hurt back. It is enflamed, however, by repetitive invective, by a continual labeling of another as the enemy, the cause of our hurt. Then hatred consumes and may erupt in violent acts.

Christians, of all people, must not become part of such hateful speech. We need to refrain from the widespread use of words to put down others. We hear this in public speech, but it also surrounds us daily in our homes and workplaces.

Let us pay attention to how we talk to our spouses, our children, our friends, our co-workers, our brothers and sisters in the church. We often feel hurt by those closest to us, and we in turn hurt them back. Remember that "a soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1).

To give a soft answer in the face of wrath is not easily done or quickly learned. It takes practice. It comes from waiting, waiting in silence. It germinates from a seed of love, from a desire to love the other, especially the enemy.

Giving soft answers in an atmosphere of wrathful yelling will require a willingness to listen first, then think before we speak. We will have to trust the Holy Spirit to give us the words when we need them (Luke 12:12). And we must remember that "to make an apt answer is a joy to anyone, and a word in season, how good it is!" (Proverbs 15:23).

We must counter hateful speech with loving, respectful speech. For just as hateful speech can lead to acts of violence, so too can loving speech lead to acts of cooperation and mutually seeking the truth. Remember the advice of St. Francis, "Preach the gospel. If necessary, use words."
Gordon Houser

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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Christ comes wherever we are

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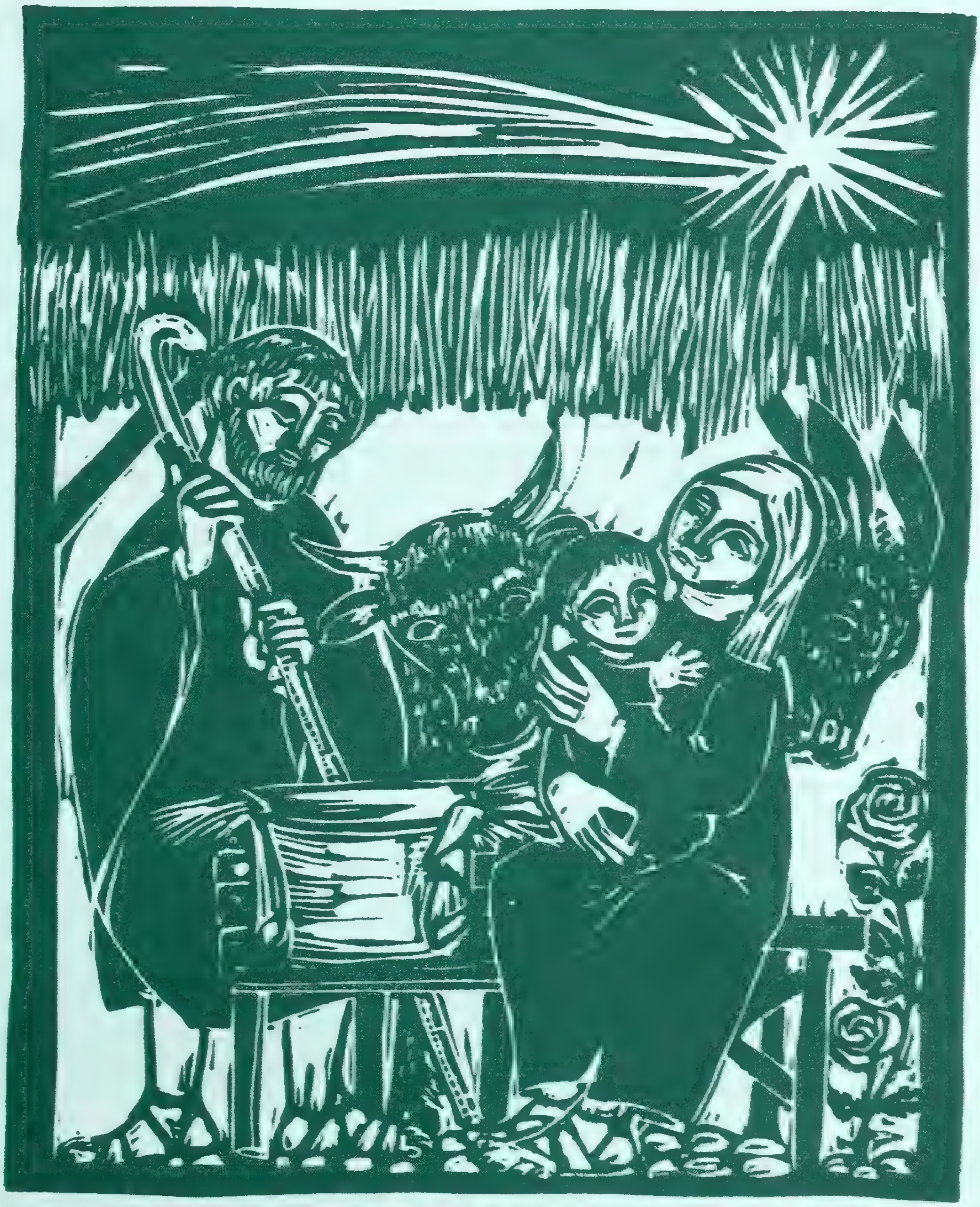
- China's Bethlehem (see page 6)
- Treasured traditions (see page 8)



Prologue

Ours is a pilgrim faith. Although we meet in buildings for worship, we give allegiance to the God of the Universe, one not bound by walls of stone.

This issue encourages us to celebrate Christ's birth wherever we find ourselves. Sandra Shantz tells how she and her family found new life in Christ after a Mennonite pastor visited them in their barroom (page 3).

Sharon Pryor describes a moving Christmas celebration in China in July (page 6).

Carol Schrag offers ideas from various Mennonites for celebrating Christmas in a way that serves others (page 8).

In the spirit of Christmas, Ted Koontz pledges his support of church administrators (page 11), who often get blamed for problems but who need our prayers.

J.B. Miller encourages each of us to have a will and to make sure it communicates our wishes (page 12).

Note the special offer on page 20. Order a gift subscription by Jan. 31, 1996, and you may receive a handy 1996 General Conference Mennonite Church datebook.

Our staff wishes you a joyous Christmas and a blessed new year. *gh*

Next issue: The stigma of mental illness

Cover: Artwork by Helen Siegl

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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A couple's hotel bar becomes a place where they find Jesus and reach out to others.

Our barroom Christmas

Sandra Shantz, as told to Audrey Hanlon

On a bitterly cold January day our 15-year-old daughter ran away from our home. For the previous seven years, John had managed the Elverson Hotel in Elverson, Pa. We lived on the third floor with our five children. The hotel bar was our kitchen and social center.

Christmas that year (1976) had been like many others. We decorated and made party plans for 50 to 60 friends. We loved the festivities of the season, not to mention the added income from the bar and giving piles of gifts to our children.

Then, two weeks later, our daughter ran away, and John and I were forced to re-examine ourselves as parents. Failure seemed to be all around us. We were desperate, scared.

On Jan. 20, I was carrying a cheese steak and a pitcher of beer to a customer's table at noontime. Out of the corner of my eye I noticed a stranger in a black leather jacket standing outside the back door.

I motioned with my head for him to step inside from the sharp snow, then I went to the door to see what he wanted or what he was selling.

"I'm the pastor at Hopewell Mennonite Church," he said, appearing awkward in the presence of a bar. "I see it's a busy time. I'll come back tomorrow. I heard you have a family problem and I wondered if I could help," he said before stepping back into the fresh country air.

When the pastor arrived the next day at 2:00, John and I took him upstairs to our living quarters, where we poured out our problems. He listened intently before telling us how Jesus Christ wanted to forgive us and come into our lives to make us new.

"Jesus says to each of us today," the pastor explained before reading from Revelation 3:20 (NIV), "'Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.'

"This is an invitation to you from Christ," he continued as we struggled with the meaning of his words. "Do you want to invite Christ into your lives this afternoon?"

"I certainly do," John said, tears brimming his eyes. "I've walked with guilt since I was a boy."

"I want to also," I said, not at all sure the Lord was ready to accept a barmaid.

Years of guilt: At the pastor's

RNS (for illustration only)

"Please, Dad, let him stay at least until after Christmas."

John and I and our children chose to focus on giving rather than receiving gifts, which radically transformed our barroom Christmas.

invitation, just as the living room clock struck three, John and I knelt with the pastor at our coffee table and asked Jesus to forgive us and to be Lord of our lives. Immediately we both felt released from the years of guilt we carried.

Within a week the pastor and some of his church members began a Friday night Bible study in the basement directly under the bar. For months afterward, on Friday nights we took various customers downstairs to meet the pastor; they also met Jesus.

Nine months later we permanently closed the bar at 2:00 one morning, amid the rowdy protesting of our unsaved patrons. With the help of our Mennonite friends, we reopened six hours later as a Christian restaurant.

When Christmas arrived in 1977, John and I and our children chose to focus on giving rather than receiving gifts, which radically transformed our barroom Christmas.

That year an apparently homeless person showed up daily on the hotel porch, his hands dug deep in his jeans pockets. The man paced a four-by-six-foot space without saying a word to anyone.

"Please, Dad," the children begged, "let him stay at least until after Christmas."

Not wanting to endanger the children, John hesitated. But then he invited the stranger in.

We spent time with our silent guest, providing him meals, a room, new clothing and jobs in the kitchen. He got along especially well with the children. All this time he continued his daily pacing.

Two nights before Christmas, during our family prayer circle, John asked him if he wanted to invite Jesus to come into his life, too.

"Yes," he said, smiling broadly.

John explained to him the same verses the Mennonite pastor read when he led us to the Lord. Then, to our surprise, our visitor repeated after John a simple prayer of confession and acceptance of Jesus as his Savior. After the prayer, he told us he was a Vietnam War veteran and that his name was also John.

"Perhaps he's a prisoner of war pacing a cell in his thoughts," John said one day as we watched him walk his imaginary block.

Our highlight came on Christmas Day, when he announced he would go to church with us.

He was starting to have a good time with everyone when, one day in early January, he disappeared as mysteriously as he had arrived. We have not seen him since.

During our first Christmas as Christians, we watched in wonder as our children, parents, friends, siblings, cousins and our former bartender accepted Christ or began their journeys toward faith in Christ.

Because of our conversion and the pastor's ongoing spiritual care for us, a renewal began at Hopewell Mennonite Church that grew to be what some call the largest known Mennonite-Amish revival.

Today we pastor an outreach of Hopewell Church in Spring City, Pa., my husband's hometown. It is one of the places he promised God he would go.

Inner healing: Our children have married and given us grandchildren. To heal the effects of our previous lifestyle, the Lord has led each of us through inner healing to forgiveness and restoration with each other.

As traditional as the former gold garland, red satin balls and John's barroom party plans, every year a few days before Christmas I arrange red carnations and fresh evergreens around tall white candles for our family's Christmas dinner table.

Standing behind each chair, I pray for the person who will sit there. At my own chair I kneel in gratitude to thank God for forgiveness. It is God's greatest gift of all.

Audrey A. Hanlon lives in Birdsboro, Pa., as do the Shantzes.

God became naked

David Janzen

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were naked—a symbol of vulnerability. And God said, "It is good." We can come close, we can delight and risk being fully alive. No need to protect ourselves. Who we are—our bodies, our impulses, our attractions for each other, our drive to explore and understand how things work—everything speaks of the joy hidden within existence. Everything created calls us to communion with God.

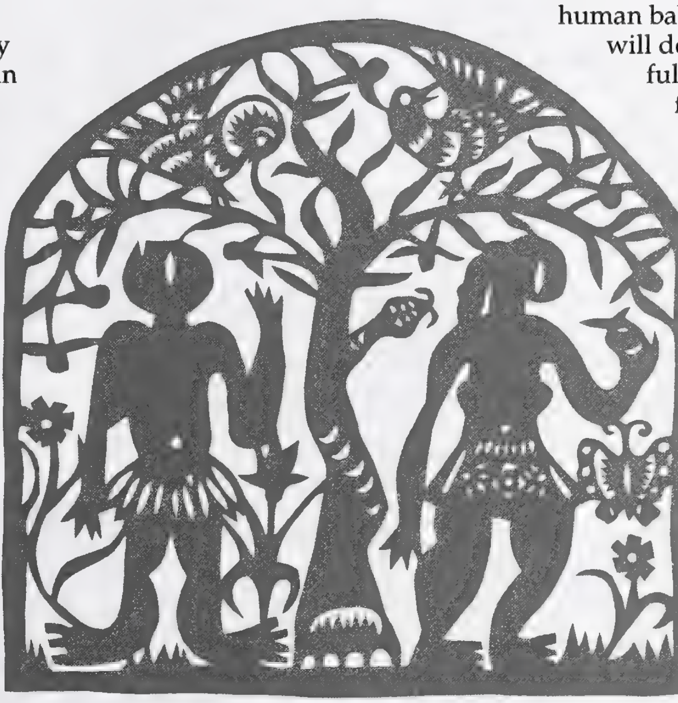
Our human body is curiously fashioned without defenses. An insect's skeleton is on the outside to protect its living flesh. Turtles have shells, mammals have fur, birds have feathers. We have no antlers or quills or skunk-like odors to protect ourselves. Our strength—our skeleton—is on the inside, and our living flesh is on the outside, protected only by a thin membrane of skin. We are made for communion with each other. We are also easily wounded.

But our innocence has been shattered. Clothes are a necessity to protect ourselves from the elements, but even more, from our unruly fantasies and impulses. To protect ourselves we create authority structures that soon become our oppressors. Out of fear and loneliness we abuse those nearest us. We escape into compulsive thinking and behavior. We need a new beginning. We need a savior.

"It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Hebrews 2:10 NRSV).

Jesus was sent to a stable in Bethlehem on a mission to suffer with us and to save us. In so doing he became perfect. Jesus existed before time with God where nothing could hurt him. But in order to become perfect he had to come to earth, be born a helpless human baby and suffer all that humans will do to each other. To become fully divine he had to become fully human. What an amazing understanding of what divinity really is and what it takes to save us.

On Jesus, our Savior, we can hang our fears and griefs and be set free of their power. Walking with him among fellow disciples, we can learn a second naivete that dares to love despite our wounds, that returns good for evil. In Jesus we see God become naked and defenseless in a hostile world. No guarantee of protection, just infinite supply. In him we touch a depth of love that can never be exhausted.



Nanjing Theological Seminary

David Janzen is a member of Reba Place Fellowship in Evanston, Ill. He co-edits the monthly meditation guide of Christian communities from which these excerpts are taken. Reprinted from the MCC Peace Office Newsletter *(July-August 1993).*

China's Bethlehem

On a hot, steamy July night in China, everyone in the auditorium felt God's presence.

Sharon E. Pryor

Christmas came five months early that year. It was a typical July day in central China. Inside the buildings of the Anhui Normal University the temperature was tolerable, but when I stepped outside the shock of the heat hitting my face made me stop in my steps. I closed my eyes, pictured a furnace with its door opened upon me, and fought to move forward.

The university students were English teachers sent to summer school to improve their language skills. Some had taught Russian for 10 years but had learned two weeks earlier that Russian was now out. English was in, and they were required to attend this summer course away from home.

Course material and heat were just two of the problems the Chinese teachers faced. The rooms they shared with five others were worse than American jail cells; six rickety beds and one old table and chair completed the decor. No glass adorned the windows, so the outside elements had free access to their limited space. Visiting birds were a problem. Community latrines were unmentionable, the cafeteria food a disgrace to a culture that prided itself on quality cuisine. In all, it was a grim summer for the Chinese English teachers. Except for one thing: For the first time in their lives they were instructed in English by native English speakers. Living, breathing materialists were in their classrooms.

Sixty of us arrived, sponsored by a North American Christian organization but sanctioned by the Chinese government. We were a crazy-quilt mixture of educators and interested believers who wanted to touch China through this newly opened door.

By Chinese standards we were loud, fun-loving and entirely too happy. We were too tall and too fat; the Chinese giggled at our funny noses. "All Americans look alike to me," one said. Some expressed shock at how ugly we all were; we didn't look like the American stars they had seen in the movies.

Drama seemed the best way to tell history, so we all became stars of sorts that summer. Holidays became a focal point for the sessions, opening a natural door for sharing our religious heritage. Three nights each week we foreigners provided free entertainment, as we enacted various events of America's past. Video and TV cameras captured our amateur performances so that millions of Chinese could watch later at home. Thus it came time to celebrate a steamy Christmas in late July.

Weeks of preparation preceded our Christmas performance, as classes worked diligently to learn "The Twelve Days of Christmas," "Jingle Bells" and "Silent Night." Finally the big night arrived.

Every square inch of the aged auditorium was filled; lungs longed for fresher air. Curious townspeople peeked shyly through windows and doors, seeking a glimpse of American life. It was the best show in Hefei that hot Friday night.

Lights dimmed and the show began. First came Santa and a time of hilarious abandonment with "The Twelve

Using drama to tell history: *Chinese teacher-students practice their English.*

I stole a glance at the university president, fearful of his response. Tears streamed down his face, matching my own.

Days of Christmas." Then, in a hushed silence, the holy family and their entourage crossed the stage.

A physiotherapist from Pittsburgh played Mary, accompanied by a California music teacher who portrayed Joseph. Shepherds in make-do costumes joined angels of questionable background as the story that forever changed history was slowly read. The babe was just a wad of blankets, since no dolls were available in utilitarian China. "Mary" quietly rocked her "child" as the words of Luke floated out into the stale, hot air.

Then came the moment for which we had practiced. It was time for Chinese and Americans to join in "Silent Night." I took my place at the miniature keyboard brought across the ocean for the occasion, playing the introduction on the tiny keys. With one voice the song began. "Silent night, holy night … "

Suddenly chills coursed through my body. Was it the joy of unity? Of melted barriers? No, it was more. The presence of the Lord had come to our humble gathering. Like Bethlehem so long before, God came. It was a holy night. I stole a glance at the university president, fearful of his response. Tears streamed down his face, matching my own.

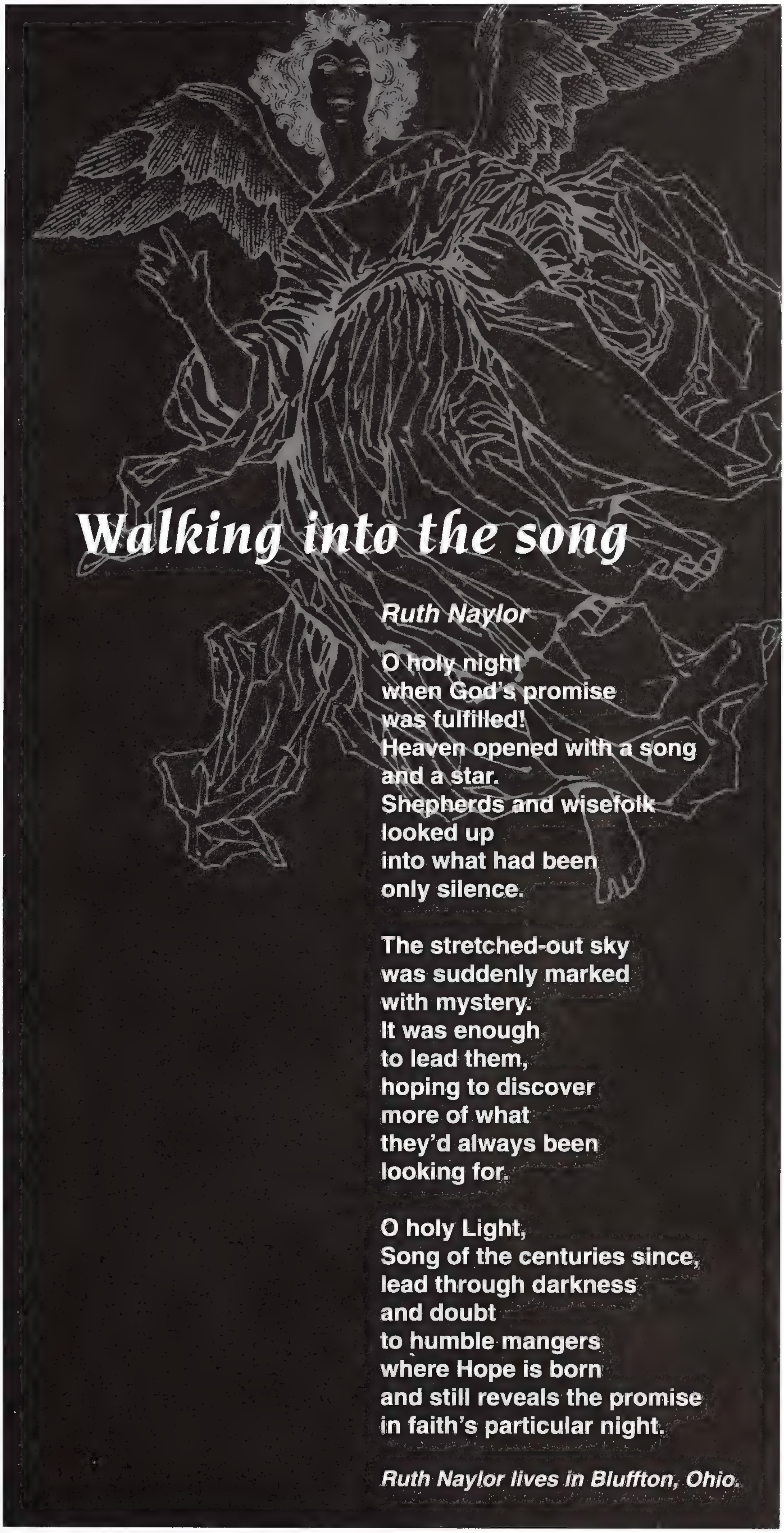
At the end of the song, a hallowed hush filled the building. Though they were untrained in holiness, the Chinese people knew better than to respond with clapping. No one wanted to lose the sacred moment.

Later, as my students escorted me back to my dorm room, they were still pensive. One ventured a question: "Mrs. Pryor, was that normal?"

"No, Wai Lung, it wasn't."

Christ the Savior was born, on July 23, 1987, in Hefei, China.

Sharon E. Pryor served in China with English Language Institute, China. She lives in Sweet Home, Ore.



Walking into the song

Ruth Naylor

O holy night
when God's promise
was fulfilled!
Heaven opened with a song
and a star.
Shepherds and wisefolk
looked up
into what had been
only silence.

The stretched-out sky
was suddenly marked
with mystery.
It was enough
to lead them,
hoping to discover
more of what
they'd always been
looking for.

O holy Light,
Song of the centuries since,
lead through darkness
and doubt
to humble mangers
where Hope is born
and still reveals the promise
in faith's particular night.

Ruth Naylor lives in Bluffton, Ohio.

Treasured traditions

Ideas for celebrating Christmas in a way that serves others

Carol L. Schrag

This year Ron and Dena Braun of North Newton, Kan., will keep up their Christmas tradition of giving to others by making sure refugees in Bosnia have a Christmas. The Brauns are assembling a refugee kit to be sent through Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to Bosnia.

Dena Braun

Dena Braun

"We decided on this project because Bosnia is in the news, and there is an emergency need right now," Dena says. "Even though we don't know the recipients' names or see their faces, we can still give.

"Mary and Joseph were refugees. When Jesus was young they had to flee their home," she says.

The Brauns have made a tradition of using a 30-day MCC giving calendar to help those less fortunate. According to Dena, it "helps us remember how much of the basics (soap, toiletries, bandages, towels) we have, and how we are so blessed."

They use "Louie," their MCC giving bank shaped like a monkey, to deposit a certain amount of money times the number of blankets, jackets, toothbrushes or other items that they focus on for the given day.

Katherine Claassen

Host students

Katherine Patterson Claassen, a member of Grace Hill Mennonite Church near Whitewater, Kan., remembers her family hosting students from Bethel College (North Newton) who didn't go home for the holidays.

"We didn't want others to miss out on the holidays just because they lived so far from home," she says. "So we included them in caroling, the Christmas dinner, gift-giving, even after-Christmas shopping.

"It added another dimension to our lives. My brother and I knew we wouldn't be in college forever, so we wanted to make the most of that opportunity," she says. The Pattersons continued this for about six years.

Bonita Burch

Use Scripture

Bonita Burch of rural Newton, Kan., has found a way of incorporating present-day "treasures" for her four children with a Scripture that pertains to the life of Christ.

She makes an Advent wreath using pouches to hold a quarter, grape gum, raisins, heart stickers or a birthday candle to symbolize some part of Christ's life.

"We generally do this in the evening for our devotional. One child passes out the treasure, while another reads the Scripture," Bonita says. "I change it as the children get older to meet their expectations."

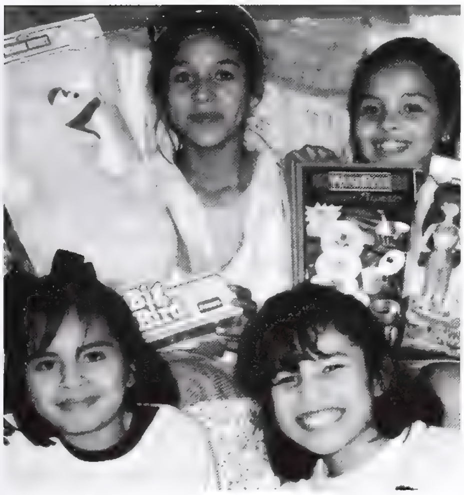
"The best part about this is that the whole family gets together and does something," her daughter Sara says. "And it's fun."

Sponsor children

Some other ideas for giving this Christmas come from Sevia Robertson of Elbing, Kan., who along with her husband, Alistair, sponsors a group of children from Children's Haven (a children's home in Mexico), making sure they have Christmas.

"God 'sponsored' us by sending his Son, a gift to us, so we might receive the everlasting gift of life. We are trying to model what God did for those without," Sevia says.

What we do for others is little compared with what most North Americans will receive this Christmas.



Sponsor children: *From left are Ingrid Gutierrez, Veronica Marquez, Dulce Padilla and Laura Gutierez from Children's Haven. The Robertsons sponsored them in 1992.*

Other ideas include baking Christmas bread and goodies and delivering them as a family to neighbors. Sevia says it is fun to see the neighbors' eyes light up when they open their door.

"When we display our Nativity scene each year, we leave the baby Jesus out of the manger, until Christmas Day. This adds a sense of expectancy, anticipation and joy," she says.

Sponsoring an international student for the holidays, the Robertsons gain appreciation for another's culture and customs, and for their children it is a time of exposure to others in this world.

Carol Claassen

Make gifts

Carol Claassen, also a member of Grace Hill Mennonite Church, makes things for her grandchildren.

"I want them to have something they'll treasure in the future," she says. She's made "quillows" (combination of a quilt and pillow), little tool belts, personalized pillows and soft-sculptured Nativity scenes for each family.

Pastor Loyal Martin of Newton offers these ideas for a special tradition:

- **Adopt a grandparent.** Seek out those in the community. Invite them to all the meals, family times and, if possible, the gift-giving time.

Loyal and Rosella Martin

- **Creatively demonstrate the Christmas story** complete with stuffed donkeys, sheep and so forth. Invite neighbors over or offer to bring the drama to a neighbor's house.
- **If musically inclined, do a lone musical serenade** all night, as a friend, Gary Barber of Fresno, Calif., did. Loyal says he played his trombone for dozens of friends until he tired out between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m.
- **Go Christmas caroling.** Split up into teams to cover the entire church.
- Loyal describes how he and his wife, Rosella, celebrated one Christmas by taking their children to a Christmas Eve Mass at a local Catholic church. The celebration sparked so much discussion that the family went home and participated in a **Communion service** of their own. With no grape juice on hand, the kids "innovated with food coloring in water."
- **Organize a Christmas caroling party on your block.** Notify all the neighbors as to where and when to start. End the time at your place with hot cocoa, cider and cookies. Loyal says this is a great way to get to know your neighbors.

Christ calls us to consider the reason we celebrate. What we do for others is little compared with what most North Americans will receive this Christmas. By giving ourselves we may be surprised to learn how much we receive.

Make this Christmas a treasured tradition for yourself as well as the recipient of your gift.

Carol L. Schrag lives in Newton, Kan.

Letters

BE OPTIMISTIC

Regarding your newsclip about Norma McCorvey ["Jane Roe"] in the Oct. 24 issue, page 17, I would like to discuss your use of the phrase "still lives with a lesbian partner." The implication is negative. Why not be positive? Be optimistic.

How about this scenario: McCorvey leads her "lesbian partner" to Christ, they learn how great it can be to live a Christian life together, they attend church together (not a Mennonite church of course—we know that the Mennonite church is closed to gays and lesbians).

See, aren't happy endings better than gloom and doom? *Name withheld by request*

LIFESTYLE CHOICES

I appreciated your issue on addictions (Oct. 24). The pain and frustration of living with an addict are well articulated.

Both in the articles and the editorial, addiction is referred to as a disease. I agree that an addicted person may present pathological symptoms. I also agree that it may be of some comfort to think of an addiction—whether personal or in a family member—as a diseased condition instead of a moral failure or a sin.

Perhaps there is another way to look at this. Actions that lead to and support an addiction may also be described as lifestyle choices. The chronic workaholic who nurses an ulcer, the person engaging in unsafe sex with a series of partners who develops symptoms of AIDS, the social drinker who develops a dependency on alcohol all make lifestyle choices. This definition helps put the onus where it belongs: on the free will of the person making unwise choices. Labeling personal shortcomings a disease puts the onus on our health-care professionals, counselors and care-giving institutions. While all these can play a part in treating an addict, we would be well served in evaluating our personal, family, community and church mores that lead to a wholeness within. *Rudy E. Friesen, Winnipeg*

REFLECTIONS ON WORK, MONEY

This morning, before I had a chance to read the cover, I brought my copy of *The Mennonite* (Nov. 14) with me to work. I am currently employed in an unchallenging position that allows me to read. The "days are painfully slow."

I read with interest the article by Frank Soto Albrecht (page 3). It's obvious, but it should still be pointed out that in the United States many people work for our minimum wage and are forced to work many extra hours in order to make ends meet. I believe it is a rare thing to be able to enjoy a "vocation," creative or not.

In Jim Smucker's article "Four Things I Need From Church" (page 6), he addressed many important issues. I often feel called to continue my work as an advocate for the poor, a vocation that does not pay much in the Midwest. I am constrained by the needs of my family and repayment of my student loans. As hard as it may be for a rich person to get into heaven, I often see money as being the tool that will set me free, giving me time and resources.

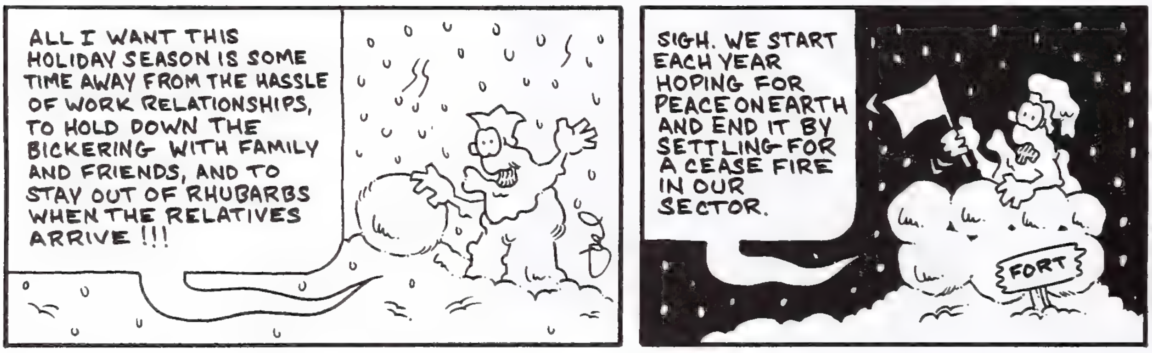
The Mennonite teachings on materialism (all of which are "Christian" and taken from biblical reference) often conflict for me as I try to give my children a less "poor" life than I had—even though that means offering them material goods. A wise woman, whose family makes an effort to live below the taxable level, told me it was much easier to do if you knew that at any time you could meet your needs and buy what you wanted—something most poor U.S. citizens can't do. For the poor in the United States the struggle is to become part of the material society, not retreat from it. The attraction to churches that sanction materialism and wealth is strong.

There are many more politically conservative churches that have quit recognizing Christ's call to minister to the poor and have embraced materialism and attitudes that convey "that which is good for me, as long as it is done in the name of Christ, is good." (I once heard a minister explain that the "eye of a needle" was really a gate that was large. He failed to mention that an overloaded camel would still have a hard time getting through.)

I want to see Mr. Smucker get support from his church. Money is the tool that allows the freedom to have a voice for many issues that other faiths are now ignoring. However, I hope that in his own business he is quick to recognize that the minimum wage does not meet the needs of citizens in the United States. Many a business owner who is charitable with his or her church and community fails to recognize how well those dollars could be used on his or her own employees. After all, charity begins at home. *Carrie Lindsey-Munzinger, Lawrence, Kan.*

Inside
Mennonite
WORK
vocation or necessity?

Pontius' Puddle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SIGH. WE START EACH YEAR HOPING FOR PEACE ON EARTH AND END IT BY SETTLING FOR A CEASE FIRE IN OUR SECTOR.
FORT
© Joel Kauffmann

Editor's note: *We welcome all letters. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

A covenant of love

Church administrators need our support.

Ted Koontz

What we need most in our institutional life is a covenant between administrators and employees—a covenant of love. It cannot be prescribed or demanded or legally or institutionally enforced. I do not suggest mainly a warm sentiment or even a close personal relationship. I mean a care for the well-being of the other that enables others to carry out their tasks with energy and joy.

A covenant has two sides, it is a set of pledges to one another. I have asked myself, What do I need from my administrators? Here are pledges I want my administrators to make:

1. A blessing in my vocation. I do what I do out of a sense of calling. I need to know that my supervisor believes my being here is a right response to my calling. I need affirmation, encouragement.

2. Honest communication. I need to be told what I do wrong. I need straight, clear and loving feedback on my failings—and on my future with the institution. I need to be told if others do not see me as suited for my role. I also want to know the state of the institution and its future.

3. A sense of participation in and ownership of the enterprise to which I am giving my life's energies. I need the opportunity to speak on issues that affect me personally. I also need a voice on larger matters of institutional direction. I care about our mission. I need to have the sense that I am being listened to, even though I know that administrators will not always agree with my point of view.

4. Leadership and decision making. In many settings I am frustrated by timid leaders. I need administrators who will take the risk and responsibility of leading, ones who listen not only to the various human voices around them but to God's voice and then propose courses of action based on that listening. I do not want autocratic leaders. Before decisions are made I need clarity about where and how they will be made and how I can have input in them. When proposals are brought and decisions are made, I want clear rationales for them, including some understanding of what other major options were considered and why they were rejected. But leadership involves a responsibility to lead.

5. Respect. I need administrators who assume that I care about our mission, that I want the good of the whole, that when I speak I speak out of concern for our mission. I care about our future; I'm not just a member of a "pressure group" representing a set of "interests."

I know that my administrators have sometimes failed to give me all I need and want from them. But I am struck by how well they have blessed me. I have also seen the ways I have failed to give them what I owe in a covenant of love. I make these pledges to my administrators:

1. I pledge to give a blessing. I will remember you regularly in prayer. I desire to check in with you regularly. I intend to speak a word of encouragement to you at least monthly. I will cultivate a spirit in me that sees you as one of God's good gifts to me.

2. I pledge to give honest feedback. You may be unaware of what employees are thinking or saying. I intend to be clear about my views and feelings. I will avoid letting things build up inside me so that a barrier prevents communication. I pledge to speak up when I am disturbed about something or when I see you becoming weighed down—seeking to remember at the same time that you are busy. I pledge to seek to discern what is important to say and what is not.

3. I pledge to respect your charge. This charge is given you (not me) by the church, to shape the overall direction of our life together and our mission. I will respect your mandate to lead, even when I disagree. I promise to remember that your position will often cause you to view things differently from me. I will keep in mind the saying, "Where you stand depends upon where you sit." I will try to remember that your seat usually gives you a better vantage point for making judgments about our overall life together than does my seat, and to give you the benefit of the doubt.

4. I pledge a spirit of teamwork. I have noticed how easy it is for an adversarial assumption to creep into our relationship. Because you have larger overall responsibility, you also have more power. It is easy for me to feel resentful of that, easy to feel ignored, unappreciated, unheard, even exploited. I pledge to remember that we are on the same team.

> ***In a time of cutting back in many institutions, how do we avoid work overload for top administrators?***

In a time of cutting back in many institutions, how do we avoid work overload for top administrators? I know the hours Marlin Miller (who died a year ago) gave to his work as president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary far exceeded any reasonable expectation. I know that AMBS kept telling him to slow down. But we also told him, "This needs doing, that needs doing." How can we avoid giving these double messages?

Life for primary administrators is often lonely. It is routine that the hardest things administrators face are things that cannot be shared in the circles they normally turn to for support. How do we provide administrators with personal, emotional and spiritual support?

God has given the church many gifts, among them the gift of administration. It is a gift often taken for granted. Thank God for good administrators. But I wonder if there are ways we can walk more supportively with our administrators, lightening the hard work they do on our behalf.

Ted Koontz teaches ethics and peace studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. He is a member of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Be sure you have the will you want

Prepare a will or else the state will by default.

J.B. Miller

Former U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger recently made the news in a way he probably did not intend. What made headlines when he died in June was the fact that he had prepared his own will. Even more noteworthy, some attorneys felt he did a poor job of estate planning, which subjected his estate to estate taxes that were higher than necessary.

While that analysis is debatable, Chief Justice Burger did take one step that many Americans do not take—that is, he prepared a will. Statistics show that between 40 and 60 percent of all Americans die intestate, that is, without a will. Another 9 percent of wills are invalid for one reason or another.

I am always surprised by these statistics because the bottom line is that only a person who is unmarried, childless and without property should feel comfortable about not having a will. The rest of us need a will. Some in recent years have utilized a living trust to transfer their property, thus avoiding probate. But a will is still needed to take care of property that may not be in the trust, as well as to name an executor of your estate and a guardian for any minor children.

Some people assume that dying without a will is no big deal. The fact is that without a will, you lose control over what happens to your property. If you are married and you die without a will, any property will go to your spouse and any children you have. What percentage the spouse receives varies state by state—some give more

J.B. Miller is vice president for financial services for Mennonite Mutual Aid and manager of Mennonite Foundation.

to the spouse, but in others the children may receive a higher percentage. These formulas become particularly problematic when a person has children from different marriages.

For single people, dying without a will means that the state's intestacy laws will decide who gets your property. In most cases, if you intended to leave something to friends or to charitable organizations, your objective will not be met. Instead, some distant relative may receive your property.

Significant problems: Rather than prepare a will, parents sometimes place property in their names and jointly with a child, assuming all their children will share the estate equally. This method can create significant problems. First, the child holding the property at the time of death of the parent has no legal obligation to share the estate. Second, the transfer may result in a taxable gift to the other siblings. Using joint property methods with children for estate planning needs to be considered carefully.

While Chief Justice Burger prepared his own will, most estate planners do not recommend this method. A will prepared by a licensed attorney is still the safest route. Preparing a will does not need to be a major monetary investment since in most areas a simple will can be prepared for $150 to $200. More complicated estates, where trusts may be recommended, will obviously cost more, but again it is an investment that should return significant dividends to the survivors.

A well-defined estate plan, including a properly drawn will, can result in significant estate tax savings. Without a will, you will be subject to maximum estate taxes, some of which may be avoided with a good estate plan.

In most cases, a properly prepared will survives the probate process intact, ensuring that the deceased's property is disposed of in the manner directed. This reduces significant anxiety and stress for the survivors and for the executor who carries out the directives in the will.

A will is an act of caring. It shows concern for your survivors, your spouse, your children and friends you might want to remember you after you are gone. A will also allows you to leave some of your property to charity. Without a will, the state will decide who receives your property. None will go to the church and other charities you supported.

Think of your will as a road map. It lets the survivors know what you want to happen to your property when you are gone. Otherwise the state will make those decisions for you. In the final analysis, everyone has a will: it is either one that you prepare or one that the state prepares. Take your pick.

Some common legal terms

Beneficiaries: People who inherit property from your estate

Codicil: A legal document that becomes part of your last will and testament and that outlines changes to the original document. This may be used to eliminate or add a beneficiary, name a different executor or make other minor modifications.

Executor: Sometimes called a personal representative, this is the person named in your will to see that your estate is settled according to your directions.

Guardian: The person who has custody of your minor children and makes the decisions of daily life

Intestate: Dying without a will. Any property owned by the deceased will be distributed according to state law.

Last will and testament: A legal document that transfers your property after you die and names the person(s) who will settle your estate, care for any children who are minors or who are incompetent, and administer any trusts that were established

Probate: The legal process of proving or verifying a will through the courts

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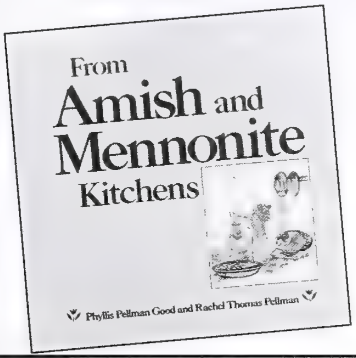
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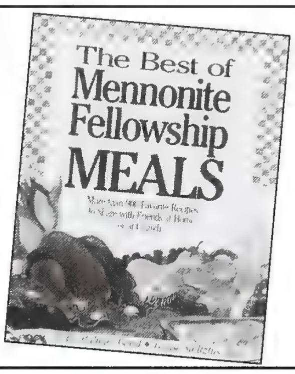
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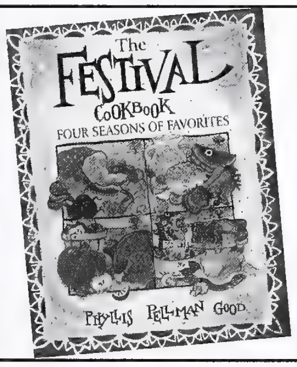
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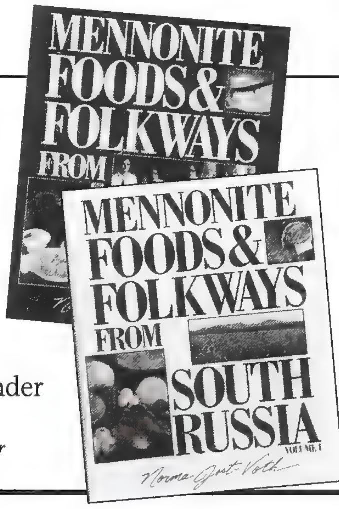
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News

The Mennonite Church has replaced two members of the committee that will guide integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. Lee Snyder, who recently accepted the presidency of Bluffton (Ohio) College, and Dwight McFadden, MC moderator-elect, have stepped down from the committee. The two new members are Donella Clemens from Souderton, Pa., and Lindsey Robinson from Lancaster, Pa.

• • •

Stephan Gerber, of Buckten, Switzerland, recently used his love of biking to raise about 30,000 Swiss francs ($26,200 U.S./$35,400 Cdn.) for Mennonite Central Committee work in the former Yugoslavia. Gerber organized a solo long-distance ride from Paris to Basel, Switzerland. He made it to a point just 20 kilometers (12 miles) outside of Basel, where cramps forced him to end the ride. By covering the 520-kilometer (312-mile) distance in 21.5 hours, Gerber met his goal of finishing the stretch in 24 hours or less.

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Parties involved in a dispute over a Mennonite women's conference in British Columbia met Nov. 8 to talk out their differences. Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia first supported then withdrew support for the conference when some constituents raised concern that the conference participants may have espoused unorthodox beliefs. The conference was held May 26-28 without MCC support. At the November meeting, MCC brought together pastors who had raised concerns, the planning committee of the conference, representatives of MCC B.C.'s board and the MCC B.C. women's concerns committee, as well as leaders from the B.C. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches and the Conference of Mennonites in B.C. The gathering recognized a shortcoming in process and communication over the incident and expressed "a desire to work at greater levels of accountability and face-to-face discussion."

Bluffton College names its eighth president

Bluffton, Ohio—The Bluffton College board of trustees has announced the appointment of Lee Snyder as the college's eighth president, starting with the 1996-97 academic year.

Snyder will replace Elmer Neufeld, who has served the college 30 years, including 18 as president. He will retire from the college following the current academic year.

Snyder comes to Bluffton from Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., where she has served in the academic dean's office since 1974. She has been vice president and academic dean since 1987.

"I was interested in Bluffton for some time because of its clearly focused mission," Snyder said, citing the Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center and the prison education program at North Central Correctional Institute, Marion, Ohio, as examples of that vision.

She said she was also attracted to Bluffton because of the school's move into graduate education with its new master of education program. At EMU, Snyder was instrumental in initiating master's programs in counseling, conflict analysis and transformation, and education.

Snyder says working among General Conference constituents will be "new territory—it will mean learning to know new names." But she said she felt at home immediately in the Bluffton community.

Just before her appointment to Bluffton, Snyder was appointed as a Mennonite Church representative to the newly formed integration committee that will oversee merger of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. Because of the move, the Mennonite Church opted to replace her on the integration committee (see newsclip at top left of this page).

Snyder

Morris Stutzman, trustee and chair of the presidential search committee, said the committee "has found Dr. Snyder to be a strong advocate of academic excellence, to have an awareness and understanding of issues in higher education and their impact on small church-related colleges and to have a willingness to work with institutional issues and goals. She also is very warm and personable, is committed to the Mennonite/Anabaptist faith and identity, and is open to other faith traditions."

Credentials of former minister revoked

Newton, Kan.—The ministerial credentials of Hubert Brown, North Newton, Kan., have been suspended for two years following allegations of sexual misconduct. Brown resigned as dean of students at Hesston (Kan.) College, Oct. 26.

"None of the allegations pertains to students or employees of the college," said Hesston president Loren Swartzendruber. He said Brown resigned after information about allegations of misconduct received by the committee overseeing Brown's ministerial credentials was passed on to the college.

Brown had no comment about the allegations or his resignation.

Brown began as dean of the college in July 1992. He served as executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church from 1988 to 1992. Prior to that he served as a minister in Inglewood, Calif., 1978-88, as director of student services for Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church, 1974-78, and served on the Mennonite Church General Board, 1983-85. Brown was a frequent speaker at Mennonite churches and conferences, including Wichita '95 in July.

The ministerial committee of the Western District Conference and the leadership commission of the Kansas/Oklahoma District of South Central Mennonite Conference of the Mennonite Church took joint action Nov. 14 to suspend Brown's credentials. Suspension is the second most serious action allowed under the guidelines for ministerial discipline used by the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. The most serious is withdrawal of credentials. Under the guidelines, a suspension of credentials may last for two years, at which time the credentials must be either reinstated or withdrawn.

The ministerial committee began processing the allegations of misconduct in September. Committee members and Hesston College personnel would not comment further on the nature of the allegations.

Char Hochstetler, Hesston's half-time campus counselor, stepped in as interim dean of students Nov. 6. She continues as a quarter-time counselor. The college is reviewing the nature of the position and other questions about administrative structure before deciding whether to replace Brown. *Larry Penner*

General Board rolls up sleeves on integration

Winnipeg (GCMC)—The word "integration" was on everyone's lips when the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) met Nov. 17-19. It was the first time the board had met in full session since GC delegates voted in July to move toward integration with the Mennonite Church.

It was also the first time the board met with the board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC). The two boards met together for three hours on Nov. 18.

"We are in this together, as we work toward integration," said GC moderator Darrell Fast, Newton, Kan., as he opened the joint session. He invited those present to discuss commonalities and issues from CMC and GC points of view.

Board members were quick to list commonalities, including "Jesus is Lord," "The Confession of Faith,"

continued on page 16

Chinese church celebrates new roof

Newton, Kan. (GCMC/CEE)—Worship services at the Gospel Church, Puyang, China, will no longer have to be canceled due to rain now that a leaky roof has been fixed. Over 1,000 people crowded into the church to celebrate Oct. 29.

Myrrl Byler

Gospel Church, Puyang

General Conference Mennonite Church missionary Henry Brown started the congregation, and the building was erected in 1917.

Myrrl Byler, China Educational Exchange director, and Larry Kehler, secretary for Asia for the Commission on Overseas Mission, were present at the four-hour celebration.

The two men planned to give the church a $12,000 U.S. check from COM to help with the repairs, which included, in addition to the roof, new ceiling fans and benches. When they arrived, however, they discovered the church had raised all the money it needed.

In fact, following a prayer meeting this past summer, Christians around Puyang raised the equivalent of $10,000 U.S. in 50 days. There are approximately 7,000 Christians in this part of China. Most are farmers with an annual income of $300. Earlier in the year, the church had raised the equivalent of $5,000.

"Across China, poor Christians are building new churches and repairing old ones. They do it differently than we do. ... Instead of appointing a director of development, they spend a lot of time praying," said Byler.

Inside the news

Canadian conferences look to merge publications / p. 16

MEDA looks at business ethics / p. 17

MCC Canada reviews work in Russia, at home / p. 18

Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Church celebrated its 75th anniversary Dec. 2-3.

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Mennonites moving to Winkler, Man., from colonies in Latin America can now find a familiar sign in the Winitoba Mall—*Die Mennonitische Post*. The German language newspaper, produced in Steinbach, Man., recently opened a satellite office in Winkler. The office is also a retail outlet for German-language books and other books of interest to both Canadian and Latin American Mennonites. The newspaper is the main source of information for Mennonites living in conservative colonies in Latin America, says Henry Rempel, chair of the paper's nine-member board.

• • •

Two Latin American conscientious objectors are suffering for their beliefs. On Nov. 4, 18-year-old Paraguayan Cesar Barrios was detained and tortured by military personnel for advocating conscientious objection. He was traveling to give a workshop on the subject when his bus was detained and he was abducted and severely beaten. Luis Gabriel Caldas Leon, an 18-year-old Colombian conscientious objector, has received anonymous threats, potentially from death squads, reports the Mennonite-affiliated Colombian Collective for Conscientious Objection. Leon has been imprisoned since June for refusing to be inducted into the military. His mother and girlfriend have also received threats. To write in support of the two, contact the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors at (202) 293-3220.

Israeli settlers in Hebron, West Bank, have instituted foot patrols through the town to "enhance Jewish presence in the city." Christian Peacemaker Teams members there say that settler silence in the city following the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin ended Nov. 17 with the initiation of the foot patrols. Some 1,000 settlers participated.

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Three British Columbia cyclists took a five-day bicycle tour in Jamaica through Mennonite Central Committee. On the tour, sponsored by MCC British Columbia and MCC Jamaica, Jason Warner, Vince Hartman and Sheldon Walsh learned about Jamaican life and culture with Marlin Yoder of Mennonite Central Committee Jamaica and Jamaican Kevin Lee. "One of our emphases here in Jamaica is cultural exchange," says Yoder, an avid cyclist. "So I thought why not do an exchange involving cycling?" The group visited several orphanages, worshiped in Jamaican churches and heard resource people discuss local issues.

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Three typhoons in one month have claimed hundreds of lives and left hundreds of thousands homeless in the central and northern Philippines. The total confirmed dead from typhoons Memeng on Oct. 1, Pepang on Oct. 29 and Rosing on Nov. 3 has reached more than 1,000, with hundreds of others still missing as of late November. Typhoon Rosing, known internationally as Angela, was the strongest storm to hit the Philippines in 11 years and rampaged directly through the metro Manila area, home to more than 10 million people. The combined typhoons drove 1.2 million people from their homes; many remain in the hundreds of temporary evacuation centers in schools and churches set up to handle the flood of refugees. Mennonite Central Committee is assisting by supplying rice, dried fish, beans, blankets and mats, valued at $13,500 Cdn./$10,000 U.S., to some 800 families who lost their homes.

"We're people of God's peace" and, "We're mission and service oriented."

CMC members identified a variety of issues that affect integration planning:

- "What do we do nationally and what do we do regionally?" asked David Brubacher, Vineland, Ont.
- "The shifting of … funding toward the local congregations and away from other levels of conference," said Neil Heinrichs, Winnipeg.
- "The question [in Canada] of east and west, the way we understand who we are and how we understand our connection with the Mennonite Church," said Ron Sawatsky, Scarborough, Ont.

The discussion of GC issues centered quickly on national differences. "As Mennonites in the U.S., we've not clarified when we're speaking as GC Mennonites in general or as GC Mennonites from the U.S. We don't have our ducks in a row like the Canadian conference does," Fast said.

But GC member Jim Harder, North Newton, Kan., responded, "We have a broad understanding that our U.S. structure needs to be reworked … but there would be a great deal of anxiety about a CMC model."

When GC vice moderator Bernie Wiebe, Winnipeg, suggested that loyal CMC members see recent CMC restructuring and self-assertion as growth but loyal GC members see it as separation, CMC general secretary Helmut Harder responded, "If [separation] is the direction, then I'm not interested. The Integration Exploration Committee's model [for separate Canadian and U.S. conferences] brings us closer together."

As common challenges, board members listed, "How to energize the congregations," "Being clear as conferences what our ministry is," "Who's going to get the resources?" and, "Leadership training."

Integration protocol and future Mennonite communication: In separate sessions the GC board pondered process and protocol for fleshing out integration. They agreed that structures for mission/ministry and finance needed to be developed soon.

A proposal from the GC Division of

Canadian board revamps publications

Winnipeg (*Mennonite Reporter*)—At Conference of Mennonites in Canada board meetings Oct. 20-21, a plan was proposed to join the print communications efforts of Mennonite Publishing Service (which publishes *Mennonite Reporter*), the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (which publishes *Nexus*) and five area conferences in Canada.

The proposal recommends that the partner groups "recreate" *Mennonite Reporter* into a periodical that will circulate to all CMC households.

The goal of the recommendation is to foster unity within the Mennonite community that relates to CMC, and to increase the ownership of conferences and their members in their primary periodical.

The proposal would reshape the Mennonite Publishing Service board to be controlled by a majority of members appointed or elected by the provincial conferences. MPS would retain its separate corporate identity.

Accountability would be strengthened by regular reporting by the MPS board chair to the CMC General Board and the area conferences. Some wondered whether financing required for the new publication—and for its circulation to all households—could be found.

Although Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada delegates hesitated, most participants favored a magazine format over the current newspaper format. They also called for more pictures and graphics, shorter articles (without sacrificing depth of content) and consideration of features for children, youth and non-English language groups.

The recommendation for the new publishing plan will go to Mennonite Publishing Service executive, CMC General Board, and the executive committees of five area conferences: Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan, Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, and Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia.

If approved, the recommendation will go to conference delegate sessions in 1996 with the goal of implementing changes in January 1997.

General Services (DGS) proved to be a case study for dealing with specific challenges. The division proposed that the new integration committee set up a working group to look at readership and mission of *The Mennonite, Gospel Herald* and *Christian Living*, and explore the development of a new magazine.

After considerable discussion the board decided

- that the recommendation to the integration committee should be processed by the Mennonite Church and CMC general boards as well,
- that the two periodicals that currently serve Canadian readers, *Mennonite Reporter* and *Nexus*, be included in the discussion,
- that U.S. and Canadian publications or editions of a magazine be considered,
- that a target date as early as 1997 be set for creation of a new communication vehicle.

Safety net: The board also discussed how it might temper the effect of its decision last March to apply undesignated contributions according to budget percentages rather than where most needed. Along with the decision, the board had promised to create a financial "safety net" for the commissions. GC business manager and treasurer Ted Stuckey estimated that in 1995, without a safety net, the Commission on Overseas Mission might receive 91.9 percent of its income budget, the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) 87.4 percent, the Commission on Education 87.4 percent, and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary 121.3 percent.

"The changes made by this board regarding contributions have had a dramatic effect on CHM. Without a safety net, we would have a deficit of over $126,000," said Lois Barrett, CHM executive secretary.

Although CHM board representative James Wenger, Fresno, Calif., pleaded that the General Board not "penalize" commissions for the first year of "the experiment," the board upheld a recommendation from DGS that no commission end the year with a budget percentage less than 1.5 percent below the percentage achieved by the conference as a whole. The board also made adjustments in the form that congregations use when sending in contributions.

In other business the board

- discussed a position paper of the Evangelical Anabaptist Alliance and how to continue to include varied perspectives on GC boards,
- decided that special GC delegate sessions be held in Winnipeg in 1997 in conjunction with the CMC annual conference and the 50th anniversary of Canadian Mennonite Bible College,
- adopted in principle a new Mennonite polity for ministerial leadership. *Dave Linscheid*

MEDA meeting stresses ethical business

King of Prussia, Pa. (MEDA)—Who should benefit when a business does well?

Just about everyone, according to speakers at the annual convention of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA).

The theme of the gathering Nov. 2-5 was "Just Rewards: Who Benefits From Your Business?" Attendance reached 510.

"Our businesses, and the economic resources they provide, should benefit more than just you and me," said Denver businessman Preston Hofer. Family, community, employees and the church all need to be factored into a business plan.

He urged businesspeople to get beyond one-dimensional performance indicators like revenue and profit, calling them to use economic resources to advance the kingdom of God, the ultimate owner.

Businesspeople could learn to love one another and to find ways to end misery for others, Hofer said. "Rather than beating the system, we might develop new systems that benefit all of humankind." He said people who are free of anxiety make more responsible choices about their resources.

Profit is clearly a "means-goal," not an "end-goal," for William Pollard, chair of ServiceMaster, the cleaning and maintenance giant.

Pollard said ServiceMaster had been able to break the "cycle of failure" for many thousands of low-wage workers who might otherwise drift from one menial job to another. The company's revenue and profits have grown every quarter for 24 years.

Pollard said ServiceMaster has maintained a constant interest in "who people are becoming, not only as

Mary E. Klassen

At Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., Nov. 6, Don Steider (left), Nevin Albrecht (far left) and Virgil Claassen (right) plant a dogwood tree during a remembrance service for Marlin Miller, AMBS president, one year after his death. The service, led by Duane Beck, Miller's pastor at Belmont Mennonite Church in Elkhart, was attended by more than 130 people, including family, friends and associates. Miller died unexpectedly of a heart attack on Nov. 3, 1994.

• • •

Heavy September rains in West Bengal, India, led to flooding that affected some 60,000 people in Midnapore District. At least five died in the floods, which reached 12 feet (3.6 meters) in some places. Mennonite Central Committee has provided rice, lime to disinfect water, and tarps to a local group, Nabarun Seva Niketan. The organization was once a sports club, but as members were moved by their neighbors' poverty, the club began doing development work. In recent years the group has helped build a school, a road and an irrigation canal.

Mennonites in the north part of Paris met for the first time Nov. 12. Twenty people came for a time of fellowship and theological reflection. The group decided to continue meeting once a month. In the greater Paris area of over 11 million people, there is one Mennonite church in the south (Chatenay) and one in the east (Foyer Grebel) but none in the north. Several expressed the hope that a church would eventually grow out of these meetings.

• • •

An arson fire and a rape in Wisconsin are being blamed on anger against Amish and Old Order Mennonites, according to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. The fire destroyed a Mennonite-owned business in Withee on Oct. 5. The rape victim was a 15-year-old Amish girl who was attacked in Monroe County on Nov. 1. The fire destroyed Old Order Mennonite Harry Leid's general store. The store had been broken into several times before. Residents said the crime was part of continuing harassment against Old Order Mennonites. "Somebody, for some reason, wants them out of here," said local resident Charlotte Hatlestad. A 24-year-old man was charged with kidnapping, sexual assault and reckless endangerment after admitting to the rape. The man may be charged under the state's hate crimes law, which increases penalties for crimes directed at people because of race, religion or culture. Shortly before the rape, the suspect allegedly opened fire on a buggy carrying an Amish man and three children. The horse pulling the buggy was struck by several bullets, but it survived. An unidentified resident said there was local animosity toward Mennonites because they shop in stores operated by members of their group and help each other in their businesses. Some say Mennonites do not pay enough taxes, and others dislike the buggies driving on roads. (*Mennonite Weekly Review*)

managers and producers but as wives, husbands, mothers and fathers, friends and contributors to their communities."

Not every company has such a holistic view. Economist James Harder of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., offered a sobering assessment of a widening wage gap that puts just rewards beyond the reach of many workers in Canada and the United States. While corporate profits and executive salaries have soared, median family incomes have declined steadily, he said.

> **"People matter more than things, families matter more than money, workers matter more than maximization of profits. The biblical worldview places limits on the good creation of wealth."**
>
> ***Ron Sider***

"For the first time, the wealthiest 20 percent of American households garner as much income as the remaining 80 percent. This distribution of income is more uneven than in any other industrialized country," Harder said.

He asked, "Can a CEO who unceremoniously sheds well-educated, loyal and hard-working employees ... morally accept a year-end bonus from the board of directors?"

For evangelical social activist Ron Sider, the problem stems from a "desperate battle" between God-centered theism and human-centered materialism. He said materialism is "sweeping across the globe," destroying families, the environment and societies.

For Christians, however, "nothing in the world matters as much as our relationship to God," he said. "People matter more than things, families matter more than money, workers matter more than maximization of profits. The biblical worldview places limits on the good creation of wealth." Sider urged businesspeople to "choose between Jesus and mammon."

If a world battle was raging, another, gentler wind seemed to be blowing, too. MEDA reports suggested a heightened interest in spirituality among Mennonite businesspeople overseas. President Ben Sprunger reported that a MEDA-like association has been formed by Mennonite businesspeople in Paraguay, the country where MEDA first began operations in 1953. The convention roster also included a delegation of 12 Mennonite businesspeople from Zaire who want to relate as a body to MEDA.

In the business sessions it was also reported that MEDA's 3,358 members shared enough of their own success in the past year to help the agency end the year in the black following two deficit years.

Vice president Ron Braun said MEDA's overseas development efforts had assisted more than 27,000 families in the past year. Next year's target was over 30,000. He also said the domestic assistance pilot project begun in Lancaster two years ago would expand to Norristown, Pa.; Fresno, Calif., and Denver.

MCC Canada takes steps to decentralize

Burnaby, B.C. (MCCC)—Mennonite Central Committee Canada will have fewer staff, a smaller budget and a new role following a decision made here Nov. 3.

The changes are scheduled to take effect Sept. 1, 1997.

According to MCC Canada executive director Marvin Frey, the genesis of the decision to restructure the agency dates back to 1992, when MCC Canada and the provincial MCC organizations affirmed their long-standing policy of sending the majority of donations overseas.

"What we didn't resolve was how to divide the remaining funds among the MCC organizations in Canada," Frey says. "This decision brings it to a resolution."

In Canada, the national office and the provincial MCC organizations—Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia—operate as independent organizations. This differs from the United States, where MCC U.S. and the regional MCCs are accountable to the binational MCC organization, based in Akron, Pa. In Canada, provincially-organized Mennonite relief activity actually predates the national agency.

When MCC Canada was created, the

old relief committees dissolved and transferred their activities to the new agency. For many years MCC Canada made most of the decisions about programs and spending, since it had the most staff and budget. But Frey says that over the past 10 years the provincial MCCs have become stronger and more capable of doing things once done by MCC Canada.

"With our decision we are acknowledging this shift," he says. "Now MCC Canada will be a support to the provincial MCC organizations, helping them as they relate to supporters and operate programs in their provinces."

In agreeing to the plan, MCC Canada will reduce its budget by $300,000, from $2 million to $1.7 million by 1997-98. As a result, the provincial organizations will have $200,000 more to use for services and programs in their provinces, and $100,000 more will be sent overseas.

The cutback at MCC Canada will affect all programs, but the biggest changes will occur in the human resources (personnel services) and Canadian programs areas.

Peace and justice issues: Frey says that the cutback doesn't mean MCC Canada is reducing its commitment to important peace and justice issues in Canada. "We are only saying that they may not be done by MCC Canada staff, or be done differently in the future," he says.

Frey says there could be a 20 percent reduction in staff at MCC Canada by fall of 1997. The agency has 50 staff members, seven of whom are volunteers. "This is a time of uncertainty, stress and anxiety for staff," he says.

For MCC Ontario executive director Dave Worth, the agreement "simply … confirms the direction we have been going.

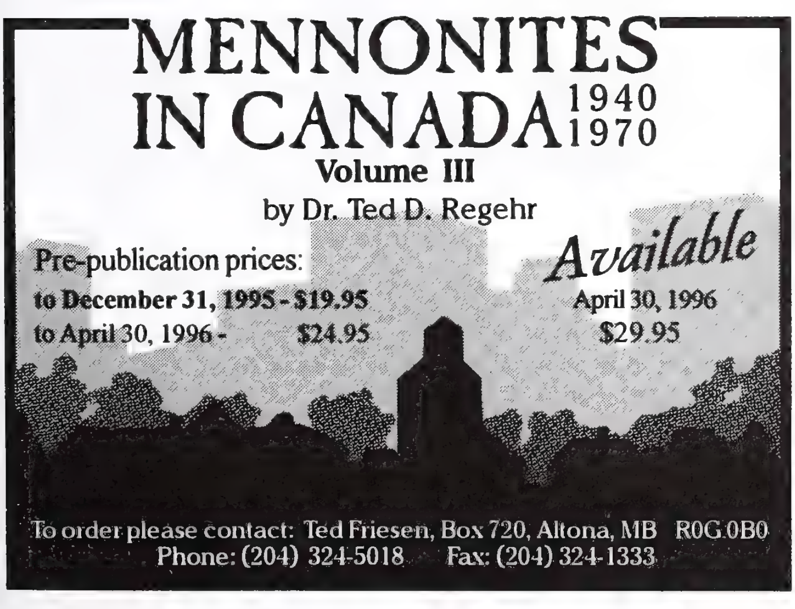
"MCC Canada has been successful in encouraging the provincial MCC organizations to get involved in important issues here in Canada. Now that we have staff who can address the issues, less is needed from the national level—its function has to change."

> **"MCC Canada has been successful in encouraging the provincial MCC organizations to get involved in important issues here in Canada. Now that we have staff who can address the issues, less is needed from the national level—its function has to change."**
>
> ***Dave Worth***

By way of example, Worth says that at one time only MCC Canada had staff who were capable of speaking about issues such as Native concerns or peace and social concerns. "Now we have staff who can do these things—MCC Canada doesn't need to do all the work."

Worth says there still is an important role for a national agency. "We need someone who can coordinate all the messages coming from the provincial organizations and keep everyone in touch," he says.

"The challenge today is to be as local as possible. MCC Canada can enable us in the provinces to do our job of helping local congregations reach out in Christian love," he says. *John Longhurst*



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A special session of the Virginia Conference of the Mennonite Church met Nov. 4 to address the subject of Mennonites in the military. The meeting was called to discuss further the controversy sparked by the 1990 "Tidewater Document" from Virginia church leaders, which suggested churches could baptize and receive as members military personnel who are open to considering the church's position on nonresistance. The statement calls churches to encourage military personnel to change their employment and to support them as they do. It says these people are not to serve as leaders in churches until they have left the military. Delegates tabled a motion that the conference not baptize or receive into church membership military personnel. (*Gospel Herald*)

• • •

A Catholic woman in the former Czechoslovakia says she was ordained in secret under Communist rule. Ludmila Javorova, 65, says that during the Communist era in Czechoslovakia, hundreds of men—celibate and married— were secretly ordained to make up for the severe shortage of priests caused by government restrictions on the church. Rumors have put the number of secretly ordained women at five or six. Javorova said one reason for ordaining women was to provide sacraments to women in prison. "Of course this ordination does not count," says an official spokesperson for the church in the Czech Republic. "It was invalid to do this in the first place." The Czech bishops' conference recently announced that the Vatican will create a special Greek Catholic diocese to accommodate the married priests. (*National Catholic Reporter*)

Record

MVS—Mennonite Voluntary Service

Global arms sales to developing countries decreased in 1994 from $17 billion Cdn. to $14 billion, but Canadian sales to the Third World jumped more than 40 percent in 1994 to an all-time high, reports *The Ploughshares Monitor.* Sales jumped $100 million over the 1993 figure of $242 million. Most of the increase is due to one product, General Motors' Light Armored Vehicles, sold to Saudi Arabia for $255 million. (*Mennonite Reporter*)

• • •

While high school athletes show slightly more self-esteem than non-athletes, they also show increased aggression, according to researchers at Texas Christian University and Adelphi University. A study reported in *Psychology Today* notes that high school athletes value academic achievement more than other students but show less self-control and less belief in the importance of honesty. The findings are supported by research in Canada showing that the longer boys participate in hockey, the more likely they are to use illegal tactics and to accept cheating and violence. (*Encounter*)

• • •

After being scattered nearly 20 years, members of the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Saigon, Vietnam, have gathered to worship. The first service was held Aug. 6. Nguyen Quang Trung, pastor of the church, says normalization of relations between Vietnam and the United States has not only furthered North American investment in Vietnam but also furthered religious freedom there. The church will meet in private homes until their church building is returned from the government's Religious Affairs Burearu. More than 200 members attended the church before it was confiscated by the Vietnamese government in 1975. Churches near Saigon have been told that buildings confiscated by the government will shortly be returned to the churches.

MINISTERS

Wendell Badertscher was licensed for ministry Nov. 4 at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Jake Bergman is pastor at Minnewasta Fellowship, Morden, Man.

Daniel Johnston was installed Oct. 22 as pastor at New Hope Church, Omaha, Neb.

Les Klassen has resigned as pastor at Mountainview Church, Vancouver.

Shoua Moua will begin a church planting ministry in Arvada, Colo., next summer.

June Thomsen was licensed for ministry Nov. 26 at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio.

WORKERS

Curtis Dyck, Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, began a one-year MVS term May 18 with Habitat for Humanity in Denver.

Valerie L. Jantz, Eden Church, Inola, Okla., will begin a four-month term in Peru with Youth Evangelism Service of Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Peter and **Susan Kehler**, Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, B.C., have accepted an invitation from the recently established Mennonite church in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, to assist in its ministry. They will leave in late January 1996 for a six- to eight-month assignment under the Commission on Overseas Mission. The Kehlers formerly served with COM for many years in Taiwan.

Dyck

Jantz

P. Kehler

S. Kehler

Martin

Reimer

Risser

Washburn

Andrea Martin, Danforth Morningside Church, Toronto, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 11 as a child-care worker at Carter Day Care in Winnipeg.

Jessica Reimer, Pembina Fellowship Church, Winkler, Man., began a one-year MVS term Oct. 1 in St. Louis. She will do peace-oriented work and serve at Ploughsharing Crafts and a shelter for women and children.

Chris Risser, Pine Grove Church, Bowmansville, Pa., will begin a four-month term in Barbados working with Youth Evangelism Service of Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Johnnie Washburn Jr., Kerrville, Texas, began a two-year MVS term Oct. 30 with the Pilsen Children's Project in Chicago.

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Single urgently needed for one-year VS position as **assistant host or hostess** at the **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference. Duties include day-to-day operation of bed and breakfast-type guest house and providing a "home away from home" for international travelers.

For information contact Annabelle Kratz, **13495 Brighton Dam Road, Clarksville, MD 21029; (301) 596-9057.**

Goshen College announces a two-year half-time position in the **history department**, beginning August 1996. Responsibilities include teaching introductory world civilization and European civilization and two upper-level courses each year in world or European history. Ph.D. preferred, master's required, in European or world history. Teaching experience expected. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Contact **John D. Nyce, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

Correction

Art Britton of Chicago, winner of $45 million in the Illinois lottery, was incorrectly identified as attending Grace Mennonite Church, Chicago, in our Nov. 14 issue. Britton attends Bethel Mennonite Community Church in Chicago.

Food services director at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. Position includes noon cafeteria and evening banquets.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Ken Herr, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

Degree-completion program director: Master's degree in business or related area required. Doctorate preferred. Experience in management and administration essential. Experience in adult education highly desirable. Responsibilities include administration of the program in management and organizational development and some teaching. Appointment date: April-May 1996 or negotiable. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Send resume to **Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.**

Goshen College announces a tenure-track opening for a **generalist in English** to teach general education composition and literature (lower level) and great books (upper level), preferably with one or more of these specializations: British literature 1850 to the present, contemporary fiction and poetry, creative writing. Ph.D. required. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

Send dossier, transcripts and statement of teaching philosophy **by Feb. 15, 1996,** to **John D. Nyce, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; (219) 535-7503; fax (219) 535-7660.**

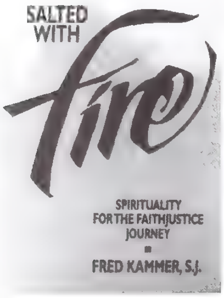
Reviews

BOOKS

JOINING ACTION AND FAITH

Salted with Fire: Spirituality for the Faithjustice Journey *by Fred Kammer, S.J. (Paulist Press, 1995, 133 pages)*

Reviewed by Terry Rempel, Tofield, Alta.



Salted with Fire, in the author's words, is a book "for the young who dream dreams of a more just world and their elders who see visions of peace." The book offers a spiritual framework for people actively engaged in the work of social change. Kammer refers to this work as "faithjustice," a habit of the believing heart.

Kammer provides many useful insights that are strengthened by short anecdotes at the beginning of each chapter and sometimes sprinkled throughout the text. The four chapters of the book revolve around the "pastoral circle," a methodology of action and reflection based on the idea of "praxis" that was developed by Paulo Freire in his book *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Using the pastoral circle as a guide, Kammer illustrates how a lifestyle of action, based on social analysis and theological reflection, can provide a solid spiritual framework for doing faithjustice and avoiding "compassion fatigue" or burnout often experienced by individuals who challenge injustice and work with the oppressed.

The book jacket describes *Salted with Fire* as a "good gumbo from the author's hometown of New Orleans." The book is rich fare, but I sometimes found the text more like sticky prairie gumbo. While the structure of the book is based on the four points of the pastoral circle, the chapters are unfocused and seem to run on. Kammer stretches his reach a little too wide by trying to highlight all four points of the pastoral circle in each chapter while using, at the same time, a single point as the theme of each chapter.

Nevertheless, *Salted with Fire* is a solid read for people seeking to make the connection between faith and action in a world of injustice.

AN ECOLOGICAL DIALOGUE

With Roots and Wings: Christianity in an Age of Ecology and Dialogue *by Jay B. McDaniel (Orbis, 1995, 231 pages)*

Reviewed by Trevor George Hunsberger Bechtel, Chicago

"Most of us want to be fully alive, to be whole." This sentence both opens and defines McDaniel's agenda in *With Roots and Wings*. McDaniel wants to envision a way of living that offers nourishing roots and unbound wings. More specifically he wants to imagine Christianity as that path.

That which keep us from life and wholeness, he says, are "rootless fundamentalism" and "wingless consumerism." Throughout the book McDaniel's demons are those of rigidity and excess, and these demons are well chosen for our ecological age. McDaniel's attack on fundamentalism is not a raid on tradition. He holds tradition at the center of his agenda. His attacks are solely on that which binds us either spiritually or materially.

McDaniel's sense of wholeness is refreshingly broad. In an accessible style, he converses and communes with God, the modern environmental movement, a bluff in the hill country of Texas, Buddhism, Judaism, bioregionalism and more.

This book is enjoyable but flawed. The conversations in the book are important, but the Christianity that McDaniel is left holding at the end of the day is too empty. McDaniel's basic assumptions about Jesus Christ, the Bible and the Christian church are too narrow. There is rarely mention of Scripture and no mention of Jesus' nature parables and their ecological promise. One is left feeling that he has searched the whole world over before plumbing the depths of Christianity.

For people interested in ecology and dialogue this book is a good read. But while it is ground breaking in interreligious dialogue on ecology, McDaniel's thought here is a good distance beyond the pale for Mennonites. For churches, study groups, or people coming into an ecological consciousness, a better choice would be *A Worldly Spirituality* by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson or *Christianity and the Environment*, edited by Calvin DeWitt.

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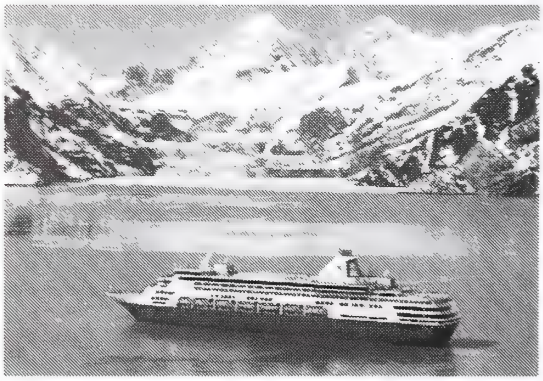

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EARTHY TRUTHS

Dear God, I'm Only a Boy *by Menno Duerksen (Wordsworth, 1995, 406 pages)*

Reviewed by Jim Robb, Newton, Kan.

Dear God,
I'm only a boy.

Menno Duerksen reveals stories from life from his childhood on the plains of Oklahoma to his "miracle" of a second marriage late in life. Along the way he touches on questions of faith and salvation, on the difficulties of the Great Depression, and on insights into the world of the late 1940s at the end of World War II.

He introduces characters that weigh heavily on the mind and spirit, for those characters (including Duerksen himself) raise the great questions of life. These questions are presented through stories he tells and the problems he faced.

Told in an animated and earthy way, the stories allow the reader to feel, taste and smell the struggles of a young man growing up amid the religious expectations of his father, his own dreams and hardships and the economic difficulty of the 1930s. The stories deal with values. They deal with hope and despair, love and hate, forgiveness and mercy, authority and rebellion.

The book is divided into three sections. The first is devoted to childhood stories from Oklahoma. (These can be informative if you ever need to go skunk trapping or have to deal with a big horse.) The second is a series of reflections on his youth. The final section, "A Wider World," relates stories of his adult life as a correspondent for the United Press. He completes the last section with two poignant stories concerning the death of his beloved wife, Ruth, and his meeting and eventual marriage to his second wife, Thea.

I found the book enjoyable and thought-provoking. Through stories, Duerksen provides us with much grist for thought about faith, relationships and human spirit. It is in the arena of the human spirit that I believe the book excels. Here I saw the struggle of people in the Great Depression, I saw relationships strained to the brink and surviving, I read about the ability of a young man to emerge from the hardships of his existence to be a mechanic, a writer and a humanitarian. It is a book to be read and discussed.

Resources

- **Am Trakt: A Mennonite Settlement in the Central Volga Region** by Johannes J. Dyck and W.E. Surukin, translated by Hermina Joldersma and Peter J. Dyck (CMBC Publications, 1995, $10 Cdn.), is the seventh volume in the Echo Historical Series on the Russian Mennonite colonies.
- **Reuben and the Blizzard** by Merle Good, illustrated by P. Buckley Moss (Good Books, 1995, $14.95 U.S.), is a children's book about Amish life.
- **Peter Dyck's stories** are now available on video in three volumes: Inspirational Favorites, Family Favorites and Humorous Favorites. Order from Menno-Hof, P.O. Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 46565; (219) 768-4117; $19.95 U.S. each.
- **Let's Make a Garden** by Tamara Awad Lobe (Herald Press, 1995, $7.95 U.S./$11.35 Cdn.) is a picture story book for ages 4 to 8 on peaceful cooperation among children of many different countries.
- **Whose Birthday Is It, Anyway?**, published by Alternatives, provides encouragement and support for those wanting to celebrate Jesus' birthday in a joyful and spiritually fulfilling way. To order contact Alternatives, P.O. Box 2857, Sioux City, IA 51106; (717) 274-8875; $4.90 U.S. postpaid.
- **The Second Reformation: Reshaping the Church for the 21st Century** by William Beckham (Touch Publications, $12.95 U.S.) sees all churches as cell churches. He offers a solution for churches that want to deal with the world's problems: the two-winged structure of a large-group wing and a small-group wing.
- **God's Wrathful Children: Political Oppression and Christian Ethics** by Willa Boesak (Eerdmans, 1995, $16.99 U.S.) discusses how black South Africans should handle their anger about past injustices theologically.
- **While We Run this Race: Confronting the Power of Racism in a Southern Church** by Nibs Stroupe and Inez Fleming (Orbis, 1995, $12.95 U.S.) tells the story of Oakhurst Presbyterian Church in Decatur, Ga., showing that although racism is powerful it can be overcome.
- **Passionate Believing: The Fundamentalist Face of Islam** by Bill Musk (MARC Publications, 1995, $16 U.S.) shows how life should be lived and managed from a Muslim perspective.
- **The Unseen Face of Islam: Sharing the Gospel with Ordinary Muslims** by Bill Musk (MARC Publications, 1995, $11.95 U.S.) gives an in-depth introduction to popular Islam, exploring folk beliefs and practices.
- **Cease Fire: Searching for Sanity in America's Culture Wars** by Tom Sine (Eerdmans, 1995, $14.99 U.S.) looks at what society would look like governed by "the left" and the far religious right, and offers a third choice—God's "better way."
- **Transforming Congregations for the Future** by Loren B. Mead (Alban Institute, 1994, $11.95 U.S.), the third volume in the "Once and Future Church Series," looks at what in our institutions is ineffective and explores what changes we may need to make.
- **Autumn Gospel: Women in the Second Half of Life** by Kathleen Fischer (Paulist Press, 1995, $12.95 U.S.) explores transitions, the inner life, contemplation, the body, mourning, caregiving and more in the context of women's middle and later years.
- **Who Killed Jesus? Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus** by John Dominic Crossan (HarperSanFrancisco, 1995, $23 U.S./$35 Cdn.) shows that the Romans, not the Jews, tried and executed Jesus, and that the belief otherwise has fueled centuries of anti-Semitism.
- **Wealth as Peril and Obligation: The New Testament on Possessions** by Sondra Ely Wheeler (Eerdmans, 1995, $14.99 U.S.) shows how Scripture can both form and inform contemporary moral discernment regarding wealth.

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Editorial

On the way

We who follow Jesus are pilgrims, a people on the way. Our faith is not tied to a particular place, to a shrine or temple or tomb. We worship God wherever we find ourselves.

Jesus called himself "the way" (John 14:6), and in Acts, Luke refers to the Christian faith as "the Way" (Acts 9:2; 18:25; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22). The word implies movement yet movement in a certain direction.

We are heading Home, yet the Bible says relatively little about our destination. It says much more about how we are to travel. Alan Jones in his book *Passion for Pilgrimage* (Harper & Row, 1989) calls the Bible "a handbook for pilgrims."

Jesus calls us to follow him, to walk with him. We don't know for certain where he will lead us, only that God's Spirit will accompany us wherever we go.

Jesus himself had to walk an uncertain road, and in his last years he was on the move, homeless. "Foxes have holes," he said, "and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Luke 9:58). He was born far from his parents' home, then as a child became a refugee, an exile in Egypt while Herod slaughtered the innocent children.

Christmas often brings images of home, a cozy house with a fire, a decorated tree with presents under it. I'm as much of a sucker for these images as anyone. I love the idea of home. I've rarely been infected with wanderlust.

We must be careful, however. We must remind ourselves that we are not really at home yet. We are, as the song says, "just a-passin' through."

This means that we may have to be countercultural at Christmastime. While images of home surround us, we may need to learn about celebrating wherever we are, whether that be in a barroom in Pennsylvania (see page 3) or on a hot, steamy July night in China (see page 6).

Expand our table: Being countercultural may also mean opening our home to others. The cozy images of Christmas often involve only one's family. But God may be calling us to expand our table, our hearth, to include others who have no family. We may want to follow the example of the Shantz family, whose newborn faith led them to take in a homeless man (page 3), or the Pattersons (page 8), who hosted college students during the holidays, or the Robertsons (page 8), who sponsored a group of children from Mexico.

"Hospitality is a sign of the Resurrection," writes Alan Jones, "a sign of new life, a sign of the reordering of the universe around one great table." By bringing others into our home, we point them to our greater Home, the one toward which we travel on our pilgrimage.

Whether you find yourself away from home, in a strange setting, or at home, in a familiar place, make Christmas a celebration of the child born homeless. As we follow Jesus on the way, let us open ourselves to receive the stranger and to be received by the One who will lead us, finally, home. *Gordon Houser*

By bringing others into our home, we point them to our greater Home, the one toward which we travel on our pilgrimage.

Recyclable

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THE Mennonite

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

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Healing distorted images

- I don't belong here (see page 3)
- More than hugs and kisses (see page 6)
- 4 ways to prevent eating disorders (see page 8)

Prologue

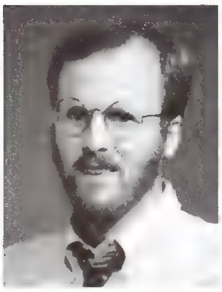
Our images of ourselves and of others are often distorted. What we see can prove destructive.

What do we think when we hear that someone has mental illness? Read Jan Eitzen's story (page 3) to learn about the awful isolation a mental patient feels and how other church members can make it worse.

Shelby Mishler Echard (page 6) addresses an issue that is not often talked about among Mennonites. It should be. I heard of cases of eating disorders among the youth at Wichita '95. Our culture's abundance of images of thinness is destroying many girls and women. Eating disorders are difficult to recognize and even more difficult to cure. Look at the helps on page 8.

Integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church is proceeding. See Dennis Koehn's opinion piece (page 10) and the news story (page 13) about the new Integration Committee's first meeting.

Margot Fieguth (page 11) blends insights she gained in Mozambique into the story of the blind man in John 9.



And Marlene Kropf encourages us to find time and space for silent retreats (page 12).

Anyone interested in receiving a 1995 index of *The Mennonite* may contact our office. They will be available after the first of the year. *gh*

Next issue: Racism and reconciliation

Cover: Photo by CLEO Photography

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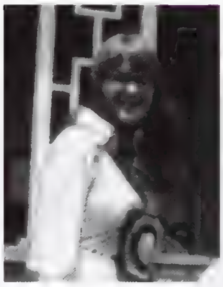

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The Mennonite is a member of Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group) and an associate member of Canadian Church Press.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: $25 U.S., $31 Canadian. Group rates available. Advertising rates available on request. Second-class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.** ©1995

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A woman's struggle with the stigma of mental illness

I don't belong here

Jan Eitzen

How have I come to this?" I asked myself as I reluctantly followed the mental health aide to the mental ward cafeteria. "I don't belong here, I'm not crazy." Groups of four sat at small square tables, eating, chatting, or smoking. I determined not to associate with these people. I hated the thought of being labeled a mental patient. I had no idea what was going to happen, what I hoped might happen, to me in the days and weeks ahead.

I resented following the aide around, kind as she was. Childlike, I let her lead me to an empty table and we set down our food trays. "Would you like tea or coffee?" she asked.

"I'll take tea, thank you." The aide was small comfort for my painful shyness. She returned with the drinks, giving me a reassuring smile as we sat down. I could hardly force food past the lump in my throat. I missed home, where my husband, our 4-year-old son and 9-month-old daughter were probably sitting down to breakfast. Yet, lacking the strength and motivation to do what needed to be done, I had been no good at home.

"I'll show you where to get in line for your medication. Then we'll see that you're assigned a housekeeping chore," explained my aide. Obviously I wasn't on vacation. Nearby, straight-haired, jean-clad teenagers carried on a boisterous conversation. How could they be happy in a place like this? At another table a couple of patients ate slowly, eyes glued to their plates, oblivious to the noise around them. Their withdrawn behavior was the only clue that this was no ordinary, everyday cafeteria.

Hundreds of cigarettes: We scraped and stacked our dishes before we walked down the long hall to the nurses' desk. My depression hadn't dulled all my sensory perceptions. The hall scents retained the memory of hundreds of cigarettes smoked and the people who smoked them. Even-spaced doorways divulged present-day murmurings and mysteries hinting at the past. The plink of a Ping-Pong ball against a paddle jarred loose memories of my dad and me walking those same halls years earlier during visits to my mom at the time of her personal crisis.

Glancing curiously into some of the rooms I noticed they all were similar: two beds, two dressers, two night stands. Brightly colored bedspreads draped each bed, an attempt to deinstitutionalize the atmosphere, I imagined. The sound of someone crying escaped the privacy of one room. Down the hall a washing machine and dryer hummed, painfully arousing feelings of homesickness in the dutiful wife and mother in me.

I prayed for instant healing so that I could return home to my family. Was the Lord on call to another emergency

Some people implied that if my faith had been strong enough I would not be where I was. I couldn't accept that, nor the idea that God was punishing me.

I don't belong here

the day my world fell apart, or had he decided that the path through this valley would be my healing?

Except for the daily routine of getting up, eating breakfast, lunch and dinner, and turning back the covers again at night to crawl into bed exhausted, ward life lacked the familiarity of homemaking. That first week, I cried every day about being hospitalized on the mental ward.

Despite daily Bible reading and talking to God, I did not know why I had become a broken person both physically and emotionally. My faith told me God was with me, but I had temporarily lost contact. Some people implied that if my faith had been strong enough I would not be where I was. I couldn't accept that, nor the idea that God was punishing me. I only knew I was beyond the point of pulling myself together and snapping out of it. My days were filled with therapy, individual counseling, art and exercise therapy, with time in between to think, talk and pray.

All the help the clinic had to offer was not untying the knots of confusion quickly enough. I was anxious to go home. Something happened to plunge me into deeper anxiety and depression. Near the end of the second week my husband came to visit.

"Will you be coming home one of these days?" he asked. It wasn't easy for him (left with full responsibility for two preschoolers besides a demanding job) to be the husband of a mental patient. While I was on the protective hospital ward, he was among relatives and friends trying to answer their questions.

"My doctor isn't sure when I'll be dismissed," I said. I braved a quick glance to gauge his reaction. His face was etched in stone, his eyes spoke his frustration and anger. I felt my apprehensions mounting as the silence between us stretched from seconds into minutes. I knew he wouldn't be pleased with my answer, but nothing prepared me for the reality of his response.

"If you don't come home soon, I don't know that I'll be able to remain your husband," he said.

At first I couldn't believe that I had heard correctly. The one person I was depending on was threatening to withdraw his love and support. Or was he just bluffing? Apparently he envisioned years ahead with a chronically ill wife—no one encouraged him to believe it might be otherwise. How could anyone really know? I only knew I was determined to get well. But how could I get well when my own husband could not understand or accept me? Could I expect anyone to understand?

Adding to my confusion was the fact that I was recuperating from a series of two major and three minor surgeries occurring over a period of nine months. During that time, family and friends had exhibited little difficulty in accepting that I needed their sympathy and help, and willingly gave it. That willingness to help continued toward my spouse and children, but I felt others withdrawing from me.

Suicidal feelings: Why was this happening to me, to us? I was tempted to give up, to give in—to chronic mental illness or worse, to the suicidal feelings that had been dogging me for several days. I couldn't remember having felt more lonely.

Recovery came slowly. Therapy began helping me realize how important it was to put my feelings into words rather than withdrawing from others. I began to unravel the misconceptions I had concerning myself and life. I began to recognize my unhealthy dependence on my husband and others. Through spiritual and emotional insight I began to realize that I could depend on God and the abilities he gave me to make decisions to care for myself and my family. I knew the future was uncertain, but I was learning to cope with that, too.

Finally, after four weeks, my psychiatrist pronounced me well enough to return home. However difficult it was to plow through the past to bring about positive changes, the hardest was yet to come. I would have to overcome the negative concepts associated with being a mental patient. I discovered that being a mental patient is not something freely shared with other people. The few times I tried, closed expressions came across people's faces, and they changed the subject as quickly as possible. Because I couldn't talk about my mental ward hospitalization as I could medical hospitalization, the whole experience seemed unreal, part of another person, another world.

The new reality I had to deal with was the terrible truth about mental and emotional illnesses—the awful isolation the mental patient feels. Avoidance and treading around the truth of my illness reinforced my fears that I might be crazy and unacceptable. I was sure that people saw me as different, not normal. I thought about questioning their attitudes toward me but doubted their ability to be honest with me. Would life ever be the same again?

Not for a long time would life be the same again, if ever. Being a mental patient creates deep scars of its own. The label of having been a mental patient took its toll on my trembling self-esteem. Sometimes I hear people make insensitive remarks or use grotesque gestures to describe a mentally ill person. This is true whether I'm in

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The new reality I had to deal with was the terrible truth about mental and emotional illnesses—the awful isolation the mental patient feels.

the company of Christians or non-Christians. Comments meant to help sometimes hurt the most: "Aren't you becoming too dependent on therapy?" "What good does therapy do? You need to depend more on God and prayer to get you through."

I thought, Is that the kind of advice one would give a patient with a ruptured appendix? Emotional illness is no less painful or life-threatening than many physical illnesses.

Have I experienced full healing and recovery? I believe that complete healing is nearly impossible as long as taboos about mental illness remain in our communities. Each time I see another person hurting, especially when that person is denied help because of archaic attitudes, I hurt, too. I have looked for opportunities to share my experience but know it is necessary sometimes to tread softly around people's apprehensions. Mostly I keep quiet and allow them to work out their own "salvation" in fear and trembling. But what an ache I feel for their loneliness.

Courage to bear the scars: I didn't choose to be mentally ill, just as most of us never choose to be physically ill. I am grateful God provided a healing profession for my mind as well as my body, and the courage to bear the scars of both. When all else seemed to fail, God's love was there just as he promised in Deuteronomy 31:8: "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

Fifteen years have passed since my initial hospitalization. I wonder whether attitudes have changed much since then. I realize now that people did not reject me as a person but were unable to understand the stranger I had become. The illness itself prevented me from helping them see behind the mask I was wearing—I was still there needing love and acceptance. During physical pain after surgery I remember being given drugs to ease the pain by a sympathetic medical profession. How can emotional pain be expressed in a way that will result in a similar sympathetic response? Some people try through bizarre behavior, or finally through suicide, but then it's too late. What is understood is treated, what is not understood is ignored or avoided.

I am recovered enough, thankfully, to see some humor in my experience. Not too long ago, a close friend and I were visiting and she responded to something I said with the common remark, "Are you crazy?"

Without hesitation I said, "Yes." We both laughed. If she would have been embarrassed or apologized for being thoughtless, we would have been standing on opposite sides of a chasm. But her laughter provided a bridge of healing that helped me see myself whole and not the least bit crazy. Maybe some day I will remember to share the laughter I enjoyed while being a patient on the mental ward.

That's another story. I wonder if anyone out there would care to listen?

Jan Eitzen lives in Hillsboro, Kan.

More than hugs and kisses

A journey of recovery from eating disorders comes from learning to receive the love of God and others.

Shelby Mishler Echard

I turned off the alarm and pulled myself out of bed. It was 5 a.m., time for my daily exercise routine of two or three hours. My body was dragging and aching, and I felt depressed. I spent the day before binge eating and purging till one in the morning. Even though I am an avid sports fan, I chose to stay at home rather than attend a Pittsburgh Pirates game with my husband.

As I began stretching, my body suddenly shut down—physically, mentally and spiritually. I woke my husband, Don. "Will you take me to look at some hospitals today? I can't do this anymore. I need help."

Three days later I was in St. Francis Medical Center in Pittsburgh. I was both afraid and relieved. Admitting my powerlessness was probably one of the hardest things I ever had done. I spent nine weeks in the eating disorder unit in an intense treatment program for anorexia and bulimia.

Therapy sessions began including individual, group and family sessions. We discussed difficult issues of communication, assertiveness, sexuality and nutrition. I began to rediscover the feelings I had suppressed for years. I was angry at God, at my parents and at myself. I felt guilty, abandoned and ashamed. Through art therapy, journaling and process groups, I became honest with myself. Though it was painful, I began to trust myself, God and others, to discover my identity.

Often I was asked, "What do you want from the people in your life and from God?" My answer was, "I want them to love me."

I had often wondered, Am I not loved because I am Mennonite, or because I am a second child, or because I am not thin? Is it because I am not intelligent enough or attractive enough? Is it because of something I don't own?

True love: *Don and Shelby Mishler Echard*

Provided by author

While growing up, I often felt deprived of love. Particularly I felt slighted when I wouldn't get as many Christmas gifts as my friends and when I didn't get the go-go boots or Cinderella watch. I felt deprived. I didn't always want to wear hand-me-down clothes. I do not remember my parents giving me hugs and kisses. I don't remember being told, "I love you."

Date rape: I looked for that love in other people. An adult family friend gave me hugs and "sugar" and said affectionate things to me during my teen years. I thought it was love that an early boyfriend had for me, but it really was date rape. I hoped the attention and love of people would give me feelings of worth, appreciation and love.

I decided that the solution was to become perfect. I wanted to look perfect, to do things perfectly and to fix everyone and everything. I desired to please everyone.

For 11 years I suffered because of abuses in sexuality, relationships and a downwardly spiraling self-perception. I was seeking love, but it was a false idea of love. I was set on having the newest and best material things, getting lots of hugs and kisses, and being showered with "I love yous." In this endless search, I ended in self-pity weighing only 86 pounds before

I had often wondered, Am I not loved because I am Mennonite, or because I am a second child, or because I am not thin? Is it because I am not intelligent enough or attractive enough? Is it because of something I don't own?

checking into the hospital.

Through dieting and excessive exercise I slipped into the continual cycle of starving and bingeing, accompanied by the abuse of laxatives and diuretics. As I lost dramatic amounts of weight, friends and family would tell me, "You look good, Shelby." That was what I wanted to hear. I enjoyed the recognition, attention and approval of others. I continued to lose weight, looking for perfection and more love.

People expressed concern that I had become too thin. They encouraged me to get help for my illness. I thought they were jealous and wanted me to get "fat." When my sister saw my protruding ribs, she urged me to seek help. I rejected their love and concern. After all, I was finally being noticed. Why should I change anything?

Now, I am recovering from anorexia, which means self-starvation, and bulimia, which is the cycle of binge eating and purging. These eating disorders helped me cope through a sense of numbness by using attention-getting behavior and biological stimulation. But they are chronic, with little hope for a complete cure. And because of a chemical in my brain, I am more prone to an eating disorder that can be triggered by certain foods. With a single bite the disease is activated.

My recovery, then, has had to be threefold: a recovery that includes physical, emotional and spiritual healing providing strength and courage to live a healthy life.

Love and support: Into my fifth year of recovery, I am thankful for God's love and grace. Particularly now I appreciate my parents, my husband, my church and my friends whose love and support have sustained me. Since that morning in 1990 I have learned a lot about love.

Al Huyard

Teaching the values of Christ: *Shelby (standing, at left) in 1972 with her parents, Paul and Catherine Mishler, and siblings (from left) Linwood, Britinie, Bonita and Chrisann (standing)*

My husband, Don, was committed to our marriage despite my years of anorexia and bulimia. He has always loved me; he saw the inner me. Many times he would say to me, "Shelby, I love you just because you are you." I didn't really understand him until I was in recovery.

I continued to search for something I

More than hugs and kisses

already had. I can now recognize the ways my parents, husband, family and friends have tried to show and give love. This true love includes more than hugs and kisses and "I love yous."

My family loved me through teaching the values of Christ; they gave me security, purpose, boundaries and discipline. My parents taught me to be hospitable, to keep a clean house, to garden and to be responsible with my money. They shared basic love in family times like prayers before meals, reading to me and family vacations. We learned that simple things like singing in the car or around the piano or playing softball in the backyard were meaningful and loving times. My husband, family and friends demonstrated love through their prayers, cards and letters.

I have seen that love is not just doing or giving. Love is also being. I was receiving what I was seeking—the real, unconditional love, the simple and pure love of God. Now I am ready to show that sincere love to others.

Shelby Mishler Echard grew up in Luray, Va. Now living in Scottdale, Pa., with her husband, Shelby works at Mennonite Publishing House and attends Kingview Mennonite Church. Reprinted from Christian Living, *June 1995.*

What is an eating disorder?

Eating disorders are extreme expressions of a range of weight and food issues experienced by men and women. These include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and compulsive overeating. All are serious emotional problems that can have life-threatening consequences.

Anorexia nervosa is characterized primarily by self-starvation and excessive weight loss. Symptoms include
- refusal to maintain weight at or above a minimally normal weight for height and age;
- intense fear of weight gain;
- distorted body image;
- extreme concern with body weight and shape.

Bulimia nervosa is characterized primarily by a secretive cycle of binge eating followed by purging. Symptoms include
- repeated episodes of bingeing and purging;
- feeling out of control during a binge;
- purging after a binge (vomiting, use of laxatives, diet pills, diuretics, excessive exercise or fasting);
- frequent dieting;
- extreme concern with body weight and shape.

Compulsive overeating is characterized primarily by periods of impulsive gorging or continuous eating. While there is no purging, there may be sporadic fasts or repetitive diets. Body weight may vary from normal to mild, moderate or severe obesity.

4 ways you can help prevent eating disorders

1 Learn all you can about anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and compulsive overeating. Genuine awareness undermines judgmental or mistaken attitudes about food, body shape and eating disorders.

2 Discourage the idea that a particular diet, weight or body size will automatically lead to happiness and fulfillment.

3 If you think someone has an eating disorder, express your concerns in a forthright, caring manner. Gently but firmly encourage the person to seek trained professional help.

4 Support local and national eating disorder organizations by volunteering your time or giving a donation. One organization is Eating Disorders and Prevention, Inc., 603 Stewart St., Suite 803, Seattle, WA 98101, (206) 382-3587. EDAP provided the information at left.

Letters

THE CITY IS A MISSION FIELD

I read with interest, as I always do, the Nov. 14 issue of *The Mennonite*. The Pontius' Puddle cartoon, which I know was meant to be satirical, upset me. It is too true. As a lifelong Chicagoan, white flight has been my biggest pet peeve about my race.

White flight in our churches, sadly, is also too true. Twenty-five years ago, I made a commitment to raise my now grown children in the city. It hasn't always been easy, but there were benefits we would have missed had we not stayed.

I am convinced cities *can* be saved if people are willing to live and work there. I understand wanting a safe place to raise families. There are more risks in the city, but there are also things that cannot be learned by isolating oneself.

Children learn values in the city that can't always be learned elsewhere. They learn conflict management, and how to get along with other cultures. They also can learn that "white" is not always "right." Something we all need to learn, for the "pie" is only so big, and Anglos desperately need to learn what it means to share.

The city is a mission field. We don't just need to go to Second- and Third-World countries to find mission needs. We have opportunity right here in our backyard. In the city, as in other countries, those trying to minister usually end up being ministered to.

Until our homes, churches, colleges and seminaries place more importance on such things, our denomination will suffer from its paternalistic nature.

While I was not born a Mennonite, I found its ideals something I could embrace. Almost 15 years later, I am disillusioned by what I see more times than not, the same hierarchical structures in place in our denomination as in others we are quick to criticize.

While we are doing much to be more inclusive and understanding of other cultures, we still have a long way to go. There is no question that racial tensions are at an all-time high in our nation. What better place to learn how to do something about it than in the city?

We emphasize "helping" the "poor, crime-afflicted" people that live in those "terrible" places instead of learning what it is like on a personal level. How can we say we empathize if we haven't a clue what it is like to live in another's shoes?

Last winter I had the privilege of traveling with a group to Central America through Mennonite Central Committee to experience the conditions there. I came away with a whole new understanding and an awe and respect for the faith and courage shown by the people of Central America. I'd like to challenge you to do the same here in the United States.

We were given a passage to ponder while in Central America. Nine months later, the passage still haunts me and reminds me to live by my convictions—not just talk about them or give an offering once in a while to appease my guilty conscience. It is, "Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8). What does it mean to you to do that? What are your children and grandchildren learning from your living example? Come live and work with us side by side here in the city. We would welcome you with open arms, just as the people of Central America welcomed us. *Deb Hicks, Chicago*

INVITATION TO WINDSOR

An open letter to the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church regarding integration and the future of our conferences:

We are writing to express our joy and enthusiasm for the decision reached at Wichita '95 to move toward integration of our binational bodies.

Windsor (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship is already a wonderfully integrated congregation. Our current members and adherents represent a rich diversity, with 50 percent having no ethnic Mennonite background and the other 50 percent coming from General Conference, Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren and other Mennonite backgrounds.

Our regional conference, the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, is also a fully integrated conference.

We believe that our congregational profile is indicative of Mennonite churches of the future. In such a diverse population, the existing levels of conference are confusing, frustrating and wasteful.

By the way, we, as one integrated congregation, invite the integration planning committee to consider Windsor as the focal point of the new denomination's headquarters. Windsor is located on the Canada-U.S. border. We bring none of the baggage of other Mennonite meccas such as Elkhart, Newton or Winnipeg. We are probably as central to the North American Mennonite population as possible. The Metro Detroit and Windsor airports make transportation throughout North America quick and easy. And best of all, we have a young, energetic, fully integrated congregation ready and willing to facilitate your move. Call us when you are ready. *Erv Wiens (pastor), Rob Tamblyn (chair) and Mary-Ann Bender (secretary), Windsor (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship*

HISTORICAL CORRECTION

Your news item on page 16 of the Nov. 14 issue regarding Mennonite Central Committee's 75th anniversary celebration in Chortitza/Ukraine needs some correction.

You state that the Chortitza House of Culture is the former Chortitza Mennonite Church. That is not quite true. The House of Culture stands on the site of the Chortitza Mennonite Church. Some people want to believe that a wall or two of the former church were incorporated into the new building. That still has to be substantiated. You further state that the Sept. 27 celebration was the first Christian service in the building since the mid-1930s. It is true that in the mid-1930s the Soviet authorities converted the church into a movie house, but from 1941 to 1943 the German Army occupied Chortitza, and the building again was used as a Mennonite church.

I was born in Rosental/Chortitza in 1931 and attended the movie house in the late 1930s and the church services from 1941 to 1943. I was also privileged to attend the MCC 75th anniversary service at the House of Culture on Sept. 27. *Paul Penner, Etobicoke, Ont.*

Editor's note: *All letters are welcome. They must be signed, but names of writers may be withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity.*

Foundations for an integrated Mennonite church

Base our integration on biblical principles.

Dennis R. Koehn

Our current institutions and structures were created to carry out the many ministries of the church. Some of these are likely to change dramatically as the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church integrate during the next decade.

All changes involve unknowns; common responses are caution and anxiety. How can we have change and order? How can we adapt yet retain stability? The most helpful guides for major organizational change in the church are clearly articulated biblical principles. They allow us to move forward without being anxious about the threat of chaos. Here are some foundational principles that can guide the development of new structures for an integrated Mennonite denomination.

1. Vision. All institutions need to have a purpose for their existence. What service is offered? Who is served? What outcomes or benefits are sought? The Bible has many inspiring vision statements. Micah writes, "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (6:8). Matthew summarizes the purpose of the church: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (28:19-20). Jesus' words are recorded in Mark: "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (12:29-31).

Stephen Covey has suggested a universal organizational mission statement in his book *Principle-Centered Leadership*: The mission of any organization could be "to improve the economic well-being and the quality of life for all stakeholders." Stakeholders include everyone who is affected by an organization. Clear vision and purpose are the starting points for creating new church structures.

2. Stewardship. This is the comprehensive biblical principle for guiding our use of all resources: human, material, financial and spiritual. We are to use our resources wisely, because all we have is "on loan" from God. We are like bankers, and God has invested funds in our bank. God expects a positive return on this investment: kingdom activity, service, evangelism, fruits of the Spirit. In Luke 12:48, Jesus says, "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded." We need to use the best technology and organizational know-how to achieve our vision with the least consumption of resources.

3. Synergy. Jesus told many parables about seeds. Planting a mustard seed is an example of synergy. The small seed is planted in the ground. Light and water are added. A large plant emerges. How does it happen?

Synergy is a modern concept. It means that resources are brought together in such a way that something new is created that is greater than the sum of the resources used. Synergy also depends on the inclusion of diversity in the resources available. I link this with the work of the Holy Spirit. We pray and work together with the expectation that God will use our efforts in creative ways. The coming together of the diverse traditions of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference will release Spirit-filled creativity, like the coming together of Jews and Gentiles in the early church.

4. Responsiveness. Organizational structures and institutions are not like stone statues, intended to remain unchanged. Our human organizations need to be constantly changing, adapting to the needs of the church and the world, always guided by biblical principles, always open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. One of the clearest pictures of responsiveness comes from the account in Acts of God's call for Peter to change: "You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without objection" (Acts 10:28-29).

We talk about responsiveness as a call for "accountability." Some calls for accountability do not seem life-giving to me, because I sense that they cloak needs for control. A focus on "responsiveness" is more comprehensive and life-giving.

These four principles—vision, stewardship, synergy and responsiveness—can guide the development of new structures and institutions. We face many questions that can be answered through the application of these principles. For example,

- What aspects of the Canadian and U.S. church's ministry should be centralized, done on a national basis or done regionally?
- Should we use old geographic boundaries of districts and conferences, or are new definitions needed?
- Should conferences or congregations send delegates to major assemblies for conducting the business of the wider church?
- Should mission (COM, CHM, MBM, EMBM) and economic development (MCC, MEDA) be carried out by separate agencies, or should a more holistic and integrated structure be created?
- Should colleges be owned by a centralized church agency, regional church entities or entities that are legally separate from the church?

Such organizational questions will need to be answered through broad-based discussion and prayerful discernment. The likelihood of agreement is much greater if we agree to start with commonly held biblical principles.

Dennis Koehn is a management consultant in Goshen, Ind. He has worked extensively with church agencies and is a member of the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"Speaking out" and other features do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Mennonite*.

Blind as the Pharisees

Insights into John 9 from the experiences of people in Mozambique

Margot Fieguth

Millions of people fled their homes during Mozambique's 15-year civil war. Before a peace treaty was signed in October 1992, the rebel group "RENAMO" virtually brought the country to a standstill. People were afraid to travel outside the cities and towns. RENAMO's aims were simply to destabilize the country; they were funded by South Africa, Portugal and fundamentalist Christians from the United States.

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him" (John 9:1-3).

As we drove into a dry, sandy area of Mozambique, we met people who had lived with poverty all their lives and now 15 years of civil war. We asked, Why do these people need to struggle so hard to live? Who sinned, they or their parents? The black church leaders answered, "Neither these people nor their parents are at fault, but they are destitute so that God's work might be revealed through them." Meeting their physical needs, their poverty gives us an opportunity to show God's love for the world.

[Jesus said] to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" (John 9:7-8).

When Mozambique gained independence in 1975 and some of the larger plantations were broken up and distributed among the people, Mennonite Central Committee workers suggested planting hardy seeds and digging irrigation ditches. The farmers planted the seeds and in a few months grew food. South African whites who had long traveled to this country to enjoy its beaches asked about these fields and farmers. Are these not the poor blacks who simply sat by the roadside and begged? So the black farmers told about the land distribution, the hardy seeds and the water.

"Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out (John 9:32-34).

The white South Africans did not believe the black people were competent, so they checked with the community elders. But the elders were afraid to say anything. They knew that the South African government funded the local terrorists.

RNS

The farmers planted the seeds and in a few months grew food. South African whites asked, Are these not the poor blacks who simply sat by the roadside and begged?

So the South Africans questioned the black farmers further: "You are ignorant blacks and you are trying to teach us?"

Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" (John 9:39-40)

When the MCC workers and the black church people heard that terrorists had come that night and burned the villagers' homes, they met with the villagers to give them courage and hope. South African whites heard about these MCC workers and said, "We do not want people like that coming into our country. We are not blind, are we?"

Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say 'We see,' your sin remains" (John 9:41).

We repeatedly ask the question, Who has sinned, who is at fault? The black church leaders, just like Jesus, did not explain away the age-old question of why there is suffering in the world. They did raise a lot of questions about who the sinners are.

We identify with our MCC workers and the black church people. We agree that the whites of South Africa with their superior attitude are blind and that the fundamentalist Christians funding terrorist groups are blind. But does the circle of guilt end so far from home?

As we read about world news, let's question the effects of dumping our excess grains on the local African economy. Let's question how our North American desire for tea, coffee, pineapple and cocaine affects the availability of local land needed to grow essential food. Let's question our North American shareholders' desire for greater profits and whether it may cause companies to underpay their workers.

The world's problems seem overwhelming; we are comfortable, so we want to turn a blind eye to the needs around us. When we shut ourselves off to the needs of the world, are we becoming blind as the Pharisees?

Margot Fieguth lives in Mississauga, Ont.

Learning to pray

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In quietness shall be your strength

We need silent retreats for our spiritual life.

Marlene Kropf

I remember how frightened I was the first time I went on a silent prayer retreat. I had never before been silent for 24 hours. What would it be like? Would I meet God—or would the heavens remain closed?

Fortunately I was given the task of picking up the retreat leader at a nearby airport. As we visited with each other, I confessed my fears and misgivings. She comforted me and assured me that I could trust God to be present in the silence.

She was right. When the 24 hours of silence ended, I found I was reluctant to speak. The silence had become a spacious, light-filled place in which I heard God speak more clearly and personally than I could ever remember. What's more, God's voice was tender and gracious, wooing me to a closer, more intimate relationship. I wanted to spend more time alone with this God.

Since that first silent retreat nearly 20 years ago, I have regularly scheduled in my calendar days of solitude for prayer. I've discovered that in the midst of a busy life, I can easily lose my way. Without a time for silence and listening to God, I can quickly become distracted by what is urgent and forget what is truly important.

Silence is also the place where new insights and understandings emerge.

Marlene Kropf serves as minister of worship and spirituality for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and teaches spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

An ancient Eastern Christian once said, "When the door of the steam bath is continually left open, the heat inside rapidly escapes through it; likewise the soul, in its desire to say many things, dissipates its remembrance of God through the door of speech, even though everything it says may be good. ... Timely silence, then, is precious, for it is nothing less than the mother of the wisest thoughts."

Both solitary retreats and communal prayer retreats can be life-giving experiences. Sometimes it is important to go away and meet God alone; at other times one's prayer is deepened by joining with others who are also seeking God in silence.

Day-long retreats: Though I have discovered that the most fruitful retreats for me include a night of silence as well as a day, I have also benefited from day-long retreats. I am fortunate to live in a place where several fine retreat facilities can be reached by an hour's drive. It is not necessary, though, to go away for a retreat. I have led and participated in retreats in a quiet church building. Once a friend and I even planned a half-day retreat in my home and a nearby park.

RNS

A growing number of congregations are periodically offering "quiet days" or silent prayer retreats for people who want to deepen their life with God.

If I have only a day for a retreat, I often follow a plan such as this:

- In the first hour I take a brisk walk on the grounds of the retreat center. Physical exercise helps quiet my heart and mind and prepares me for an encounter with God. As I walk, I look and listen for God's voice in nature. Toward the end of the hour I deliberately slow down my movements and consciously open my heart to God.
- In the next two hours, I choose a psalm for the focus of my prayer. Sometimes I rewrite the psalm, expressing my own praise and lament to God. Sometimes I sing the psalm. I write my reflections on the psalm in my journal.
- If there is a chapel available, I spend some time in quiet prayer there.
- At lunchtime I eat slowly and enjoy every morsel of food. After lunch I take another brisk walk.
- For the afternoon, I choose a gospel passage for my reflection. My favorites are the stories of Jesus' encounters with individuals. I imagine that I am present in the story and rewrite the story in my journal. I enter into a dialogue with Jesus. I listen for what God may be saying to me through the story.
- As the day comes to a close, I reread my journal and summarize what the Spirit has been saying. If I have been on retreat with another person or a group, we meet for the final hour and share with each other the fruit of our silence.

Another source of ideas for personal retreats can be found in the book *A Guide to Prayer for All God's People* by Rueben P. Job and Norman Shawchuck (Upper Room Books, 1990).

A growing number of congregations are periodically offering "quiet days" or silent prayer retreats for people who want to deepen their life with God. The seasons of Advent and Lent are particularly appropriate times for planning such retreats. A guide for a half-day prayer retreat for Lent 1996 is available from the Commission on Education, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; or from the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

WM

THE
Mennonite

DECEMBER 26, 1995

WINDOW TO MISSION

Building bridges across cultures

"Remind them ... to speak evil of no one ... to be gentle, and to show every courtesy to everyone." (Titus 3:1,2)

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Cover photo: Ana Maria Belmont in the baptismal waters (see story page 12).
Credit: Commission on Overseas Mission.

Mission Statement: Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church encourages women to be personally reconciled and committed to Christ and seeks to call forth the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit to build the church of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to: (1) promote spiritual growth through Bible study, prayer, other Christian disciplines and fellowship; (2) discern and nurture women's gifts and skills for leadership and service in the local church, the community and the world; (3) build relationships and networks for support, affirmation, discernment, witness, service and celebration; (4) support and strengthen the mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Celebrating the Table of Mary

by Maren Tyedmers Hange

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn (Luke 2:7). Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining (I Peter 4:8-9).

As I came into the hallway of a modern apartment building in Aleppo, Syria, I was greeted by as many smiling women as were able to get their heads through the narrow doorway. "Ahlan wa sahlan" (welcome) I heard as I was invited inside. Four generations of women were gathered. They came from one extended family to celebrate a new mother among them who had given birth the day before. This celebration for each new mother is part of Muslim tradition, a feast called The Table of Mary. It is held in memory of Mary, the mother of Jesus, so that "no woman would feel alone again at the time around childbirth."

I was the stranger, the newcomer, warmly welcomed to join in their traditional celebration of this event. The circle was open to me despite language, cultural and religious differences. Like Jesus, who overstepped boundaries, these women and I overstepped boundaries that separated us. For these women were Muslim, celebrating in memory of Mary the mother of Jesus, whom they honor as a prophet.

Mary gave birth to Jesus far away from family and friends while the woman here in Aleppo was surrounded by four generations of women from her family. Mary's refuge was the cold, unwelcoming stable. This woman was surrounded by her support system, the women of her extended family, in her home. Mary experienced the bare minimum while here the tables were

(continued)

Celebrating the Table of Mary

loaded with food. Mary put Jesus in the manger in swaddling clothes; this woman and child were propped up in their finest clothes. Mary celebrated with strange shepherds and foreign wise men while here laughter and joyful blessings from a close-knit family filled the room.

The chatter and laughter of more than 30 women echoed as some called out short blessings and all women would join in making the typical cry of joy that I think only Arab women know how to make. These women freely included me, and I shared my joy and smile with them.

To my great relief a young woman arrived not long after me, sent by the Sheik (a religious leader) to be my translator. She had dropped everything, given her two little sons to her husband and come. So our communication could now go beyond mere smiles and "mabruks" (congratulations).

When the food was ready these women invited me to their table. The table was loaded with Arab specialties, salads, finger foods and sweets, a feast with many colors and tastes. It was a feast not only for the stomach but also for the eye, a feast that can last for hours with food, dance and song all freely flowing in the spirit of joy. After the traditional cup of Arabic coffee that ends a visit, I left with feelings of having been blessed.

This celebration took place in a spirit of love and joy: as a blessing for the mother, giver of life; as a blessing for the new life, the hope of the family; as a blessing for each other as women, the gathered community, and as a blessing for me, the welcomed and embraced stranger.

Maybe we as Western Christians can learn something from this tradition in memory of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Could we in the West with our scattered families learn to reach out to the homeless and isolated mothers around us? Might our churches be family for each other on these occasions through similar rituals? Can we use this opportunity to celebrate life and creation in a new way? Or perhaps it does not fit our Western thinking and we only read this as another story. Whatever our choice, may the spirit of love and joy, of hospitality and celebration lead us to say: May there always be room in the inn.

> Blessed are those who are gathered
> in the bond of joy and celebration
> transcending all boundaries of
> class, color and culture,
> religion, race and gender,
> that treat no personal preference
> no physical and spiritual difference
> as aberration or handicap.

*adapted from Miriam Therese Winter**

*Winter, Miriam Therese, *Woman Word*, 1990, used with permission of the Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, New York.

Maren Tyedmers Hange and her husband Roy live in Damascus, Syria, at the invitation of the Syrian Orthodox Church. They are country representatives for MCC, trying to build bridges between Christians in the West and East, between Muslims and Christians.

For I was a stranger

by Betty Puricelli

People from 80 different countries came to the Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto in 1994. A multiservice community center sponsored by Mennonite churches, MNLCT attends to the needs of newcomers to Canada. Most new arrivals are refugees and displaced persons from armed conflicts in different parts of the world.

The Canadian government sponsors refugee applications and assists around 8,000 families a year to start a new life in Canada. It allows private groups and churches to sponsor refugees under a special master agreement to come into Canada as "landed immigrants" that have been privately sponsored. There are also many refugees who make claims at the port of entry or border and who go through a long process by which they can be determined to be Geneva Convention refugees. All of these categories include people that have suffered persecution and trauma.

The ministry we carry out in the name of Jesus Christ is a holistic ministry that seeks to address the physical, mental and spiritual needs of the person. According to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, there are about 25 million refugees today, and another million displaced persons. We realize that the work we do is very small in the face of tremendous need. However, it is a beginning.

To build bridges across the vast differences between cultures and languages is a difficult task. When you add to that the multiple losses and trauma of war and the gaps between rich and poor, bridge building is even more complex.

Mary is a perfect example. She came from Central America with her son after her husband was murdered. Mary was in a state of shock, isolated and depressed. She attended an emotional integration support group at the center. We referred her to a Christian doctor with whom we partner and who understands the trauma of war and persecution. Her son attended art therapy classes for children. Little by little she began to process her grief and move on. The culturally-sensitive counseling she received freed her to open up into faith exploration. Today she is attending classes for baptism and church membership at the Mennonite New Life Faith Community, a small Spanish-speaking congregation that has developed through the ministry of the Mennonite New Life Centre.

Another client, Maria, attends our church. On July 8, 1995, Pedro, Maria's ex-husband, fell headfirst down a full flight of stairs. He was rushed to the hospital with internal bleeding and severe head injuries. His life hung in the balance for several weeks.

(continued)

For I was a stranger

About six months prior to this accident Maria came to me for help. Pedro was coming to her home at two or three in the morning every weekend, very drunk, banging on the door and waking up the neighbors with his shouting. Maria didn't want to call the police or bring charges but neither did she want the nighttime scenes to continue. Her children were very frightened. Maria had gotten a divorce several years earlier because of Pedro's alcoholism.

The New Life Centre tried to contact Pedro to initiate a dialogue but at the time of the accident, we still had not received a return call from Pedro.

After the accident, Maria visited, encouraged and prayed for Pedro daily. Her dedication and care were unending. From not responding at all, Pedro started to open his eyes, then hear and finally speak again. Recovering the use of his body took longer. At present he is in a rehabilitation hospital and walking slowly. Pedro knows that his rehabilitation will be long, but both inside and out he wishes to be totally healed and forgiven.

The best part of this story has been the spiritual change. Pedro has enrolled in the school of God and the Lord is his teacher. Pedro would like to remarry Maria, and she is willing. A process to monitor his change is in place. It is exciting to see God at work in peoples' lives.

At the Mennonite New Life Centre and Faith Community we are facing a wonderful opportunity and a great challenge. We are starting a new facility along with the Toronto United Mennonite Church. This building will house the English church, the Spanish congregation and the community center. We welcome the opportunity to invite people to contribute to this adventure in faith and partnership across cultural and ethnic barriers.

We also invite you to consider contributing financially to the sponsorship of refugees. Every refugee sponsored by a church needs assistance to get settled in Canada. Help us by sharing the load as we respond in compassion to the tragedy of war and the reality of refugees.

Donations may be sent to the
Mennonite New Life Centre
of Toronto, 2005 Danforth
Ave., Suite #201, Toronto, ON
M46 1K1, Canada

Elizabeth Kennedy de Puricelli was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and now lives in Toronto. Betty and her husband Adolfo are co-directors of the Mennonite New Life Centre and co-pastors of the Spanish-speaking congregation, Mennonite New Life Faith Community. The Puricellis have a son and two daughters.

From up-country to *Philadelphia*

by Jean M. Hunsberger

I first came to Philadelphia from my home in the heart of the oldest Mennonite settlement in North America because I was in school in the city and my 90-minute commute was too long. The first two years in Philadelphia I had few contacts. After a while, my husband Tom and I decided to find a church here.

The summer after we were married, Second Mennonite Church in Philadelphia invited the surrounding Mennonite churches down for dinner, an afternoon service and a tour. Tom and I went down with his church. My first impression of Second Mennonite was of being welcome and of delicious food! What impressed me most was how this church dealt with the neighborhood's problems. They were honest about them, and prayed hard about them and then quietly worked to help.

Second Mennonite is an urban church of about 40 members with an affiliated mission, Crossroads Community Center. Our membership is mostly African-American, with a strong Latino minority and a smattering of Caucasians.

Crossroads Community Center houses a children's ministry, social work office, youth ministry and prison ministry. Volunteers help with Kids Klub, work groups or processing donations for the grocery bag project or school packs. Their wide-ranging activities include tutoring, Bible club, 4-H, vaccinations, nursing home visitations, and an annual day in the country. Each city child is "adopted" by an up-country (the Second Mennonite term for my home area) Mennonite family for one day. The families and the children they adopt keep in contact even after the children are grown.

I was hesitant about being part of such a multicultural body. However, I knew I had to deal with that fear, so we plunged on in, making Second Mennonite our church home. I want to stress that although building bridges with my church family is challenging and sometimes difficult, it can also be fun. It has been one of my most rewarding life experiences. As I've become involved, I've recognized

some personal rules for growth:

1. Find good listeners. At Second Mennonite I found that the best way for me to build bridges was to find safe people to bounce observations off of, such as Tom's sister, Ruth. She has been most helpful.

2. Be willing to learn. I remembered some advice from my study abroad program: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do; don't be an 'Ugly American'." Who was I to assume that my way was better than that of those who had been there longer? So, I came to learn.

3. Provide interaction opportunities. We have opportunity to share ideas, feelings and observations at our WM and women's prayer group meetings. We often have opportunities to pray for each other too, growing out of our Family Prayer Call each Sunday. Prayer breakfasts (both men's and women's), bridal showers, a Christmas Pollyanna (gift exchange) for women and wedding receptions are other fellowship opportunities beyond the regular church meetings. Somehow most of them involve food. Food is itself a bridge-builder. I love finding out how and what others cook. I can learn much about cooking and my sisters' cultures.

4. Acknowledge difficulties. I felt compelled to confess to a friend that I had a problem with prejudice. I asked her forgiveness, because this was getting in the way of our friendship.

She did forgive me. And after explaining how she felt about being slighted by people who seem to have it all together, she said, "Jean, be honest, do you really like and respect all of your own kind? We're in the last days and we cannot waste time on such things as prejudice when there's a spiritual battle going on."

5. Follow God's leading. Sisters, we must cast away the fear of things different. We must pray that God will fill us with that perfect love that casts out fear, that God will help us to allow him to examine and submit our attitudes to him. Then having prayed, we must reach out in faith and love, in God's strength, to those different from us. Then, God will be able to show us the bridges.

Jean Hunsberger and her husband, Tom, live in Philadelphia, where they attend Second Mennonite Church. Jean received a master's degree in journalism from Temple University.

Journey thoughts

by **Bek Linsenmeyer**

On a recent trip my husband Dean and I stayed with relatives of some of our church members. John and Dorothy were wonderful companions, taking a day to show us Vermont's autumn beauty. The color was at peak, the day wonderful. I also saw something wonderful in them. As we shared about our lives they told us about the great people they work with. John is in pastoral ministry. Their congregation is growing. The majority of their congregation was not raised Mennonite. What is the attraction? Do John and Dorothy somehow attract especially wonderful people? Or are they perhaps blind to people's flaws? Or do they perhaps look for what is good? I recognized that I had heard only good things about the folks they live with. It wasn't syrupy; it was loving. I have spent too few days that way.

Returning home I began reading *A Life of Prayer* by Teresa of Avila who lived in the 1500s. In writing of her early life, Teresa said "It helped me, too, that I never saw my father and mother respect anything but goodness. They were very good themselves."

Is there a message for me here, Lord? I have just seen it lived out and now I read it.

Does respect mean to recognize and affirm the good? Does it mean they looked for goodness? Does it mean they lived the advice to the Philippians: "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Carmen Miniño (page 12) stresses that they are careful what they say about the society they live in. Shannon Wiens (page 10) listens to the people around her.

Would our bridge building be easier if we, too, lived Paul's advice? What if we spent more thought on the excellent? Would we begin to see more good? Would we receive better sight? What a legacy it would be to have our children remember us as affirming the good.

Bek Linsenmeyer is editor of *Window to Mission*, working one-third time out of the Newton office. She lives outside of Inman, Kan., with her husband and two children.

Whoever would have thought I'd be supplying romance comic books?

by Shannon Wiens

"You're being so quiet. Is anything wrong?" I've heard those words often. By being quiet I can hear what others are saying: how they think and feel, what is going on around them. Sometimes I can find out what can be done to help where there is a need.

Right out of college I went with the Peace Corps to a very small village in the northeast of Brazil. Most people there had never seen an American. At first everyone was shy, but soon the children began to come close. If you can make friends with the children, the older kids and the parents aren't far behind. We lived in an adobe house just like everyone else. A young woman came to cook so she was able to reassure the curious. As I made friends with the storekeeper's children, I learned that the village school only went up to the fourth grade and was only in session when the weather was good and the roads passable. What people wanted most was something to read. The weekly Jeep brought a newspaper during good weather, but the older men took that and told others what was in it. The children didn't have a way to practice reading.

A library seemed like a good idea. The storekeeper's son came home from school for vacation and we decided to see what we could do. We had a lot of help in planning. To raise money we held bingo games for the older people and some dances for the young.

What kind of books did they want in their library? "Anything," they said. So when I went into the city I got all the free publications I thought would be of interest from U.S. government organizations on health issues, farming, child care, preserving food—anything. For the younger children I chose many easy-to-read books. On a whim I bought some of the romance comic books that were popular with young girls in the cities. When I got back and set up a simple system for checking out the books, everyone came to see what there was. The most popular items were the comic books, not only with the young girls, but with their mothers. Even the older women of the village came at odd hours to ask if there were any left!

I'm new here at Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz. Things will be a little tougher here in Hopiland. TV, tourists and the bad history of treatment from the white man's government have given whites a bad reputation that will be difficult to overcome. Hopefully, by listening and by showing we are Christians by the way we live and treat others, bridges can be built.

Shannon Wiens is beginning her MVS term at Hopi Mission School as a kindergarten teacher. She is originally from Santa Maria, Calif., and is a member of Koinonia Church in Santa Maria.

WM supports Mennonite Voluntary Service through giving to the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

Who teaches values to our children?

by Kathy Goering Reid

For centuries the church has borne witness to the incredible love of God for all the people of the world. However, our culture continues to build walls between people. In our own church families we find generalizations and stereotypes that produce racist and sexist attitudes. How can we teach our children to see building bridges of understanding as part of Jesus' biblical mandate to love our neighbors as ourselves?

Where do children learn that color, language, gender and physical ability often determine a person's power? Is it from watching their families, classmates and others? By observing differences and similarities in people and noticing reactions to these people? From the comments we make, thinking no one is listening? Is it from television?

Listen to children at play. You can hear comments like these:

"I have to drive the car. I'm a boy. Girls are terrible drivers."

"Don't trust black people. The boys just join gangs. They steal and hurt people. The girls are just welfare moms."

"She can't even walk. She has to use crutches."

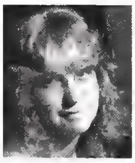
How does it impact children when they learn to believe that differences are more important than similarities? Children begin to believe that they are superior to some and inferior to others. In the process they lose self-esteem and feel dehumanized. They lose the vision of a world filled with children of God.

Those who grow up feeling superior begin to believe that it is their right to control and have power over those who appear to be inferior. Many times use of that power results in battering and abuse. Violence is common in families.

Unfortunately many churches have been reluctant to discuss inequality and discrimination. Yet God calls us to respond to inequality and the roots of violence. We need to re-examine those Scripture passages such as Galatians 3:28 and Ephesians 2:14 about God's love for all people.

Perhaps it would be helpful if the church intentionally worked to teach bridge building to our children. While positive attitudes about understanding differences are present in our church school curriculum, few sessions directly address these issues. At Austin Mennonite Church, we have tried to utilize Christian curriculums written about sexuality, gender roles, sexual abuse prevention and racism. The church is a place where we can openly discuss the attitudes of the world and how they compare with Jesus' call to be bridge builders.

Kathy Goering Reid is pastor of the Austin (Texas) Mennonite Church. She authored *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse for Children: A Religious Education Curriculum for Children ages 5-8 and 9-12.* Currently Kathy and Ken Hawkley are completing a curriculum for Faith & Life Press called *In God's Image: Empowering Girls and Boys to Live Together as Children of God.*



WM supports the Commission on Education (COE) as it produces educational material.

Working with cultural differences

by Carmen Miniño

God created one world according to Genesis 1, without divisions or boundaries. Although as a result of sin we may see ourselves as different, we were created equal by God.

In our work in Mexico City we rely on God's love that permits us to work in the midst of many cultural differences. We recognize that as we involve ourselves in the work, we should try to enter into our neighbors' world, lifting up their positive qualities.

In trying to discover and understand Mexican values, we have found Mexicans' friendliness is a quality that stands out. We have also recognized how faithful they are to their convictions. Another interesting discovery has been the cultural richness Mexico possesses.

We must also acknowledge aspects that challenge us. Religious traditionalism causes people to resist change. Truthfulness does not seem to be too important a value. Although Mexicans complain about being unhappy about their society, we are careful to respond in a way that does not suggest superiority to them.

Learning to know their culture is bringing about meaningful relationships. Nationals show interest in learning to know us better.

Anna Maria Belmont is a sister some 75 years old, the mother of four and the grandmother of seven. In March we learned to know her because of the serious illness of her son, Vicente. We prayed for him and the Lord showed mercy, healing him of cirrhosis of the liver. Because of this healing and despite her age, Ana Maria came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal savior.

We formed a new group in her home in Coyoacan. The room we met in had an altar where the whole family bowed down before idols. After some three months of Bible study, Ana Maria and her family became convinced that their idolatrous beliefs were an abomination to God. One night during a meeting they allowed us to help them destroy their images.

The relationship of the whole family with God through Jesus Christ has been strengthened so much that sister Ana Maria along with three of her children were recently baptized (see cover).

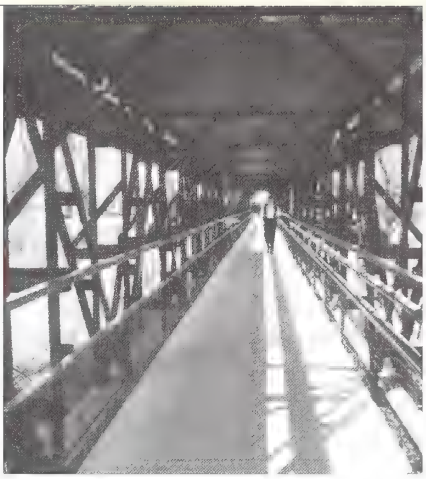
We praise God that Mexican sisters and brothers are accepting the new life that the Lord Jesus Christ wishes to give us.

Carmen Miniño and her husband, Vincente, are involved in church planting in Mexico City with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM). The Miniños are from the Dominican Republic. They have four children: two sons are with them in Mexico.

Your giving makes possible WM support of this COM ministry in Mexico City.

Facing the unfamiliar

by Jeanne Rempel



What do YOU do when what was working doesn't work anymore? Panic? Plan? Plunge into activity? How do you build a bridge from the old and familiar to the new and unknown and then find the courage to cross the bridge?

My way of working isn't working anymore and I've been pretty confused. I have no choice but to look at the new and unfamiliar and find my way there. How do I choose what is best when God's voice seems muffled and it is time to make decisions?

Some of you in your WM groups find yourselves in a similar quandary. WM "business as usual" is not working. You may valiantly be doing much more than your share, trying to make WM work like it used to. You might be frustrated, depressed, or even silently critical that other women are not picking up the WM torch. Or you may be convinced that you must find ways of doing and being that work or WM will fade away.

How do we build bridges between generations when our living situations are increasingly different? How do we call younger women to build the strong bridges that will link them to each other, the church and the world, without weighing them down? How do we help women used to older traditions feel valued with other women calling for changes? What does the future hold?

Out of my own journey I share some guidelines:

1. Who are the women, the building blocks, that you are building your WM bridge with? How can you help women find their place in the process? Would meeting in homes be more inviting? Would young mothers be able to come if you provided childcare?

2. Find ways to eliminate the "shoulds" you put upon yourselves and others. Is it time to reduce the number or size of committees and re-evaluate which projects you undertake?

3. Listen to the interests and concerns of all women in your church. Are there new, life-giving ministries that your group could explore? Would another meeting time or different meeting formats work better for you?

4. Believe unwaveringly that the God who created each of the women in your church also creates unique opportunities for your WM group to reach out to each other and the world.

Courage as you think, dream and act within your women's group. I will be thinking and praying for you as I am building my new bridge.

Jeanne Rempel is in her sixth year as WM president. She and her family live in Upland, Calif., and are involved with Peace Fellowship in Upland.

Roundtable

by Susan Jantzen

Susan Jantzen is WM coordinator, a half-time position. Susan, her husband and two sons live in Newton and worship at New Creation Fellowship.

Regional visits

● **Western District** and **Northern District** reinforced my belief that women's retreats are always special. Late-night singing under the stars, early morning walks and meditations fill the time differently than when we are at home. Even though our thoughts drift back to jobs or home life, memorable reflections, new perspectives and recommitment are some reasons women's retreats are popular. Themes from these two retreats included sharing a home with aging and dying parents, creating family memories, living with special needs children and being inventors for God. The strength that comes through honest sharing and Christian commitment proved precious to me when a day after returning from the retreat in South Dakota my father was hit by a small truck while biking and died a week later. At weekend retreats I experience prayer and Christian support among women that bring comfort and peace long after the time together.

● Idaho and Ontario meetings were celebrations of integrated women's organizations. **Pacific Northwest** women have named themselves **Mennonite Women's Ministries**, while the **Ontario** women are called **Women of Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada** (WMCEC). Both are experiencing the energy which comes when hard work has been done and the time for the new step has come. I rejoice in seeing wise and experienced women carefully tending the process of change in both of these regions.

● The yeast of the Mennonite faith is active worldwide! Pray about what you could do to participate in the **Mennonite World Conference** in Calcutta, India, scarcely a year away. What about going? Can your church or women's group take an offering for travel expenses to send someone? Could you commit yourself to learning more about Mennonites in another country? Could you contemplate the role of a worldwide church meeting and commit yourself to prayer?

May a joyful heart be your special blessing this Holiday Season.
Susan, Bek and Doris

Facts & figures

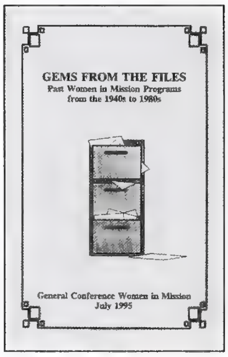
by Susan Jantzen

Remember General Conference Women in Mission in your year-end giving

	1994	1995
Feb-Oct	$107,950	$91,438

Thank you for your contributions! Some areas of United States and Canada have had strong giving this year while others are not as strong. Ask your WM group treasurer if you have sent in your GCWM amount this year. Receipts for 1995 are due January 31, 1996. Thank you to each one who supports our WM outreach!

Gems from the Files, a collection of Women in Mission programs, is now available from the WM office. Priced at $2.50 U.S./$3.00 Cdn. this booklet of programs from the 1940s to the 1980s is offered as a program planning aid.



GEMS FROM THE FILES
Past Women in Mission Programs
from the 1940s to 1980s

General Conference Women in Mission
July 1995

"Wind and Fire: Moving the life among us" is the theme for the third Anabaptist Women Doing Theology conference. It will be held May 9-11, 1996, at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) in Winnipeg. For more information contact Wendy Kroeker or Kathleen Hull, MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; phone (204)-261-6381.

Wichita '95 offerings:

Thursday, July 27, women's dinner (combined WM/WMSC offering) [to be used for a woman's travel to Mennonite World Conference from the Two-thirds World]	$1,973.68
Friday, July 28, WM/WMSC business luncheon (WM amount only) [to be used for GCWM budget]	$687.00

Window shopping

A Maryland woman reports using a Thank Offering Box in her home. Whenever she or her husband felt "especially blessed by God's great love and grace," they put an offering in the box. They have now used the box for years, seeing it as a source of spiritual growth. They are amazed at how much more money they give for world mission offerings when they place money in the Thank Offering Box throughout the year rather than writing one check at offering time. Would making Thank Offering Boxes for your church be a good group project?

World Day of Prayer — March 1, 1996

Despite violence, severe shortages and worsening physical conditions, Christian women in Haiti completed and got out of the country the 1996 World Day of Prayer Service. Come, listen and learn from these women who speak of the goodness of God when many despair. Be a part of World Day of Prayer with women in your community and around the world.

Neighbors Near and Far

Kids and adults have a new way of talking about our family of faith together. The fifth *Neighbors Near and Far: Mennonites of European Descent* is completed and available. Stories of coming to faith, old-time games, recipes and history are combined in an easy-to-use format for 3rd to 6th graders or an intergenerational group.

Women in Mission has participated in production of all five *Neighbors Near and Far* packets. For this new packet some WM groups were used to gather historical data. To follow through on our financial commitment to *Neighbors Near and Far*, we need $2,000 in contributions by January 31, 1996. This account is listed on your blue financial goals sheet. Encourage your group to consider this project! Thank you.

Churches may purchase this curriculum for $20 U.S./$25 Cdn. Delightful kits with photos, paper dolls, games, books and coins are available for checking out. Call (316) 283-5100, ext. 271, or write Neighbors Near and Far, 722 Main Street, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347.

Neighbors
Near and Far
Mennonites
of
European Descent
A mission course of study
to interest, inform
and inspire children

Published by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Editor, Bek Linsenmeyer; Coordinator, Susan Jantzen; Office Secretary, Doris Schmidt

News

AMBS names new president

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—J. Nelson Kraybill will be the next president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. He currently serves as program director of the London Mennonite Centre in England.

Kraybill will fill the position of president that Marlin E. Miller held until his death Nov. 3, 1994. Gayle Gerber Koontz served as acting president until Gerald Gerbrandt came as interim president in July 1995.

The date when Kraybill will begin serving as president is still to be determined.

James Longacre, pastor at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa., and chair of the AMBS board, commends Kraybill for his strong commitment to pastoral ministry. "His deep appreciation for the pastoral role fits well with the mission and responsibilities of AMBS," Longacre says. Kraybill brings experience in three key areas, says Longacre: commitment to pastoral ministry, academic strength and involvement in the church in mission.

Kraybill characterizes himself as a "churchman with academic interests," rather than the reverse. "My greatest joy," he says, "is teaching and preaching in the life of the church." While in graduate school, he thought he would follow the academic track and move into college or seminary teaching, "but I got happily sidetracked into the church."

Now, Kraybill says, building relationships in the church and encouraging students in pastoral ministry are aspects of his new appointment that excite him.

Kraybill

Vern Preheim, general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church, who served on the search committee, says, "Nelson brings broad experience in mission work and as a pastor." Although Nelson's church involvement has been primarily in the Mennonite Church, Preheim says, "I am confident he will quickly learn and understand the General Conference because of his experience in relating to diverse groups of people."

"One of Nelson's priorities will be to learn to know the GC church," says Lydia Harder, Scarborough, Ont., General Conference Mennonite Church member of the search committee. "I see an openness to understand the diversity among MCs and GCs as well as our common faith convictions," she says.

Kraybill attended Goshen (Ind.) College and received his Master of Divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1983. Following this he served as pastor at Taftsville (Vt.) Chapel Mennonite Church and as chair of the New England Fellowship of Mennonite Churches. He was ordained to the ministry in the Franconia Mennonite Conference in 1985.

From Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., Kraybill received his Ph.D. in New Testament studies. Since 1991 he has been program director of the London Mennonite Centre, serving under Mennonite Board of Missions. His published works include *Imperial Cult and Commerce in John's Apocalypse* (Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), an expanded version of his dissertation.

Kraybill and Ellen Graber Kraybill, his wife, have two daughters. The Kraybills both are active in leadership in the Wood Green Mennonite Church, London. *Mary E. Klassen*

Integration Committee hits ground running

Chicago—The new Integration Committee (IC), with representatives from the Mennonite Church (MC) and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), held its first meeting here Dec. 2-4.

Due to late appointments and scheduling conflicts, three members—Ruth Suter, Don Steelberg and Donella Clemens—missed part of the meeting, and one member—Lindsey Robinson—missed it altogether. Nevertheless

Inside the news

Church heads discuss differences in baptism practices / p. 16

Bethel student works to reduce school's water consumption / p. 17

By using their VISA credit card, members of the Pennsylvania Mennonite Federal Credit Union are generating additional donations to Mennonite mission and service programs. The credit union makes donations based on the amount of purchases members make with their cards. Since the rebate for missions program began in May, $3,300 has been donated to agencies including Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Disaster Service, Mennonite Board of Missions, Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite World Conference.

* * *

Blaine Klippenstein received the 1995 Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Literacy Nov. 24 for his books, which are geared to life in northern Canada. He also set up a community library in Sherridon, Man., where he teaches 25 children in the mostly Aboriginal community of 100 people. He began writing his books because in teaching literacy in Sherridon, he found most of the books available were not about experiences his students were familiar with. "All the books had stories about cities, elevators, sidewalks, highways and farms," says the 36-year-old principal and teacher. "[The students had] never been in an elevator before or seen a farm." He has written a 20-book set featuring items children in the North can relate to—like fishing, boats, mosquitoes, dirt roads and common animals. So far over 150 schools across northern Canada have bought the set, as have a few schools in Winnipeg. Production was financed by Klippenstein himself; he estimates he has put $50,000 into the project. Klippenstein began his love affair with Canada's North in 1979, when he served with Mennonite Central Committee's Summer Native Gardening Program at Poplar River, Man.

J. Daryl Byler (MCC)

Iraqi refugee children in Shustar refugee camp in Iran said thank you in broken English in early September when two Mennonite Central Committee staff distributed school kits there prepared by Mennonites in British Columbia. Nearly 3,000 Iraqis remain in the camp in southwestern Iran. They came after the 1991 Persian Gulf War and Iraq's ongoing turmoil forced them from their homes. Some 1,500 children attend classes in two small school buildings at the camp.

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Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C., had to scramble to find housing for students this fall. The school rented two apartments and a house for senior students at the last minute so that the school could house everyone. "It's a nice problem to have," says Garth Klassen, dean of students. The school has 277 full-time students. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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Correction: The annotations for "Resources for Church Growth" (Nov. 28 issue, page 8) were not by Marilyn Miller. For a listing of suggested resources, contact the Office of Outreach Ministries, 2000 Dartmouth, Boulder, CO 80303.

Members of the Integration Committee

From the Mennonite Church: Mary Burkholder, Kitchener, Ont.; Donella Clemens, Souderton, Pa.; John C. Murray, Topeka, Ind.; Lindsey Robinson, Harrisburg, Pa.

From the General Conference Mennonite Church: Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Bluffton, Ohio; Ted Rempel, Edmonton, Alta.; Donald Steelberg, Wichita, Kan.; Ruth A. Suter, San Francisco

Staff: Vern Preheim, GC general secretary; Miriam Book, MC interim general secretary; Helmut Harder, CMC general secretary

Others present at the meeting: Darrell Fast, GC moderator; Owen Burkholder, MC moderator

the group acquainted itself with the issues and each other and made a number of recommendations to the general boards of the two denominations as the committee seeks to move integration along.

The task of the IC, according to the mandate of the two general boards, is to guide and monitor the integration process. It is to pass along recommendations to the boards, who must then act on any changes to be made. "The sharper your recommendations can be," said Owen Burkholder, "the better off the general boards will be."

Helmut Harder summarized their role thus: "The common sense is here."

While much of the IC's talk and ongoing work will be dealing with program boards and conferences, various ones reminded the group of the importance of the congregation. Ruth Suter said, "If we don't serve congregations, we're out of business."

As the group acquainted itself with the various issues involved in integration, some large hurdles loomed ahead. The three Canadians at the table—Harder, Ted Rempel and Mary Burkholder—reminded the committee that a Canadian conference is in place and a U.S. conference is expected in a new denomination.

Vern Preheim said that the GC board sees the need for a U.S. conference. However, on the MC side, said Owen Burkholder, it's a question whether or not its board has owned the idea.

Preheim said that MCs ask if they're integrating with one or two groups. Practically, he said, the answer is two.

Later the IC agreed to propose to the two general boards that two representatives from the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) board attend joint sessions of the MC and GC boards.

Another challenge, Preheim said, will be sorting out delegate representation in a North American and in countrywide conferences.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen worried about continuity. "We don't want to reinvent the wheel. We need to know what has already been done."

One of the group's first tasks was approving the idea of a group of advisers. Each general board will name 10 or so people who will receive minutes of the IC meetings and will be available for consultation.

Openness: The IC also agreed to have a reporter from either *The Mennonite* or *Gospel Herald* at each meeting, with the agreement that the reporter check the story for accuracy with GC and MC general secretaries.

The group looked at its goals for the next two years. Don Steelberg emphasized the need to deal with emotions. "We can change structures," he said, "but if we don't sell it to the grassroots, [the structures] won't work well."

One of the emotions we'll need to deal with, said John Murray, is grief over laying to rest the old structures.

Steelberg argued for an evangelist leader whose sole job is meeting with people in congregations about integration.

The group added a goal that "articulates a process whereby we recognize the relational task needed for creating a new denomination."

Harder said that in Canada the CMC has been in a listening process, and this kind of person wouldn't be needed.

Someone raised the question of how much involvement the IC should have in some areas of integration. Rempel said that if we keep at arm's length too much, things will fall through the cracks.

Harder asked, "Can't we be more on

the edge of boldness?"

Preheim noted that a group from East Central States is working on a polity proposal and wondered if that group could expand its work for the IC's benefit. Friesen said that feels uncomfortable.

Donella Clemens said it makes sense, though, to collect all that's being done and look at it.

Friesen suggested that a member of IC work at collecting this information. Rempel said he is interested in being that person. The others agreed.

One periodical: The IC recommended that two representatives each from the Division of General Services (GC), Mennonite Publication Board (MC), the publications steering committee in Canada and a person from IC meet to discuss creating a new periodical. Friesen said they will need a skilled facilitator.

"People are waiting for this group to do something. We need to make our presence felt," said Darrell Fast.

The group agreed to request a decision about a new periodical by summer 1997.

The IC also said it wants to see a common yearbook as soon as is feasible. Harder said, We would still have duplication because of the *CMC Yearbook*. Preheim asked, Should we include someone from Canada in that discussion? The group agreed to recommend that the *Handbook of Information* and the *Mennonite Yearbook* be combined, in consultation with someone from Canada.

Preheim suggested that when the two general boards meet jointly once each year that that be considered an integrated general board for doing common agenda. The others agreed.

The IC looked at the previous Integration Exploration Committee report on possible mission structures in a new denomination. The group agreed to ask the various mission boards to move now toward integration along the lines of Attachment B of the IEC report (which mentions having several regional centers), with the addition that a center be established in the Southwest. Planning for this process will happen at the next meeting.

Missions are in a creative flux bordering on chaos, said Preheim. Miriam Book added that the MC program boards are wanting direction from their General Board.

Peace and justice: The IC also looked at integrating such areas as history/archives, peace and justice, ministerial leadership, funding and staffing.

Preheim said, While there should be equal sharing of personnel and funding in many areas, the GC will not always be able to afford it. For example, for an integrated historical committee, GCs may only be able to provide two board members.

Since Canada has a historical committee and a heritage center, whether or not to have one historical committee will need to be sorted out, said Harder.

Don Steelberg said a peace and justice office should be lodged in congregational ministries. The IC decided to look at this in the future.

Harder also said that forming a new ministerial committee should not ignore what Canada is already doing administratively. Steelberg added that in these discussions the pastors and congregations often get ignored.

Funding will be a complex issue, said Preheim. For its next meeting the IC wants information about current funding methods and their weaknesses and strengths. The group also wants to take up the issue of the new denomination's name at its next meeting.

Preheim introduced the idea of making the GC general secretary also the MC associate general secretary and vice versa. Such an arrangement would keep each person in touch with the other group's agenda. The IC agreed to send this idea to the general boards' executive committees.

In other business the IC agreed

- on the importance of listening to the associate groups;
- that the new denomination will likely include multiple legal entities;
- to encourage Women in Mission (GC) and Women's Missionary and Service Commission (MC) to continue working at integration and have them report to IC in March;
- to encourage the meeting of the historical committee next April to identify historical/archival needs for a new denomination;
- to name John Murray and Dorothy Nickel Friesen co-chairs and designate the co-chairs and the three general secretaries as the IC's executive committee;
- to meet twice each year. Its next meeting will be March 23-25, 1996, in Chicago. *Gordon Houser*

An Arab Mennonite church plant has begun to hold services in Philadelphia. Two years ago Palestinian George Kuttab began holding a Bible study in his home. Now more than 20 people attend the Bible study. Kuttab has joined the church-planting network of Eastern Mennonite Missions.

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George B. Stoltzfus, Elkhart, Ind., will be the Mennonite Church's next general secretary. Stoltzfus' appointment came at MC General Board meetings Nov. 16-18. A student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Stoltzfus, 50, is a medical doctor. Before attending AMBS, he was vice president for medical affairs at Memorial Hospital and Medical Center in Cumberland, Md. He will begin as general secretary July 1, 1996.

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The Mennonite Mutual Aid board adopted a new policy at Dec. 1-2 meetings that requires tithing 10 percent of the net gain of each MMA corporation each year. This is in addition to money used for fraternal programs that are available due to MMA's status as a fraternal benefit association. MMA corporations already contribute to the fraternal programs, but not equally. The net effect will be to increase the money available for MMA's fraternal programs from about $3.16 million to $3.75 million in 1995, and an estimated increase from $2.85 million to $3.27 million in 1996. MMA president Howard Brenneman reported on exploratory talks with church leaders in Canada about offering MMA plans and services in that country. Brenneman said 1996 will be a year of exploration and determining direction for 1997. The board also agreed to send a letter to the denominational integration committee for the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church. The letter pledges MMA's full support and cooperation plus the resources of the board if it would contribute to the success of the effort.

Desmond Tutu, the South African Anglican Archbishop famous for his anti-apartheid stance, has announced he will retire in June 1996. He plans to study at Emory University in Atlanta and possibly spend a year serving at the National Cathedral in Washington. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

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Bluffton (Ohio) College has been elected to the 1995-96 Templeton Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges, a poll of colleges and universities that recognizes schools that promote the development of character. The honor roll is comprised of schools that meet the following criteria: (1) encourage individual moral reasoning, (2) foster positive attitude and overall well-being, (3) encourage spiritual growth and moral values, (4) advocate a drug-free lifestyle.

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Almost $1.2 million was raised at 10 Mennonite Central Committee relief sales in Canada in 1995. In Ontario $252,000 was raised at the New Hamburg sale; $116,000 was raised at the heifer sale in Guelph; $41,000 was raised at the Black Creek sale in Toronto; $5,700 was raised at the Leamington Community Sale, and a relief sale music gala raised $1,488. In Manitoba $39,962 was raised at the Winnipeg sale; $93,000 was raised at the Morris sale; and $33,361 came in through the Brandon sale. In Saskatchewan the Hague sale and the Saskatoon sale raised $75,000 each. In Alberta $159,078 was raised at the sale in Coaldale. In British Columbia the Central Fraser Valley sale, held in Abbotsford, raised $269,031; the sale in Kelowna raised $10,000; the Prince George sale raised $12,500, and the Black Creek sale raised $9,157. Altogether a total of $1,192,000 was raised for MCC.

Church heads discuss variant practices

Chicago (Meetinghouse)—The Council of Moderators and Secretaries met here Dec. 1-2 to look at issues that concern Brethren, Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups.

The group, which began meeting in 1972, includes the heads of various peace church denominations. Present were Darrell Fast (chair), Helmut Harder and Vern Preheim, General Conference Mennonite Church (GC); Owen Burkholder, Dwight McFadden and Miriam Book, Mennonite Church (MC); Harvey Sider and Don Shafer, Brethren in Christ Church; Ed Boschman and Marvin Hein (secretary-treasurer), Mennonite Brethren Church; Don Roth, Evangelical Mennonite Church; Tim Erdel and Dennis Engbrecht, Missionary Church. The Church of the Brethren was not represented, since vice chair Donald Miller was on sabbatical leave.

Baptism: After a day of reports from each denomination, Harder raised the question of how to respond to the Catholic-Evangelical conversation. He quoted a statistic from Canada: 17 percent of Canadians are Evangelical; of these, more than a third (7 percent) are Catholic. He mentioned that some Mennonite churches have accepted members who were baptized as infants and did not want to be rebaptized. Darrell Fast said his own congregation has had this experience.

The others expressed surprise. Boschman said, "So peace and justice is not negotiable in terms of membership, but baptism is? I am amazed." Hein added, "I thought baptism would be the last place this group would compromise."

Preheim responded, "I'm amazed that [other groups] baptize kids who are 10 or 11 years old and call it believer's baptism."

"If we're only doing this because we're afraid of hurting people's feelings, then we're one generation away from practicing infant baptism," said Boschman.

While the (MC/GC) Confession of Faith makes our belief about baptism clear, Harder said, some congregations make exceptions. Shafer pointed out that Brethren in Christ's belief is also their polity.

"We could never get away with that in the General Conference," said Harder.

Sider asked, "At what point are we prepared to be exclusionary?"

Shafer pointed out that they accept divorced people into membership.

But not as pastors, said Burkholder and others. "We do," said Fast.

Burkholder asked what church membership means.

Fast told the story of George Fox, who said to William Penn when he asked how long he should wear his sword, "Wear it as long as you can."

"I would draw the line at baptizing infants," said Preheim.

Harder said, "We have a long way to go toward understanding baptism in all its meanings (by water, Spirit and blood)."

Fast quoted former seminary professor Clarence Bauman, who said, "You cannot have spirit without form, but form does not guarantee spirit."

Mennonite World Conference: The next day, Phyllis Pellman Good of the MWC executive committee asked the group to help plan the North American subtheme that will be the focus one day of the MWC assembly in Calcutta in 1997.

She said to keep two questions in mind: First, what do we North Americans want to say to the rest of the worldwide church? Second, what do we need from the rest of the church?

Harder said it would be best to begin with a Scripture and let the subtheme emerge from that. Fast recommended that they focus on Revelation 2-3, which relates to the Assembly's overall theme. Revelation 1 could be the worship setting for seven Bible studies on the seven letters to the churches, added Hein.

At last summer's Assembly of the Mennonite Church came a resolution to open conversation about a Mennonite World Alliance. Good reported that MWC executive secretary Larry Miller expressed reservations about the idea because it may be misunderstood. MWC is already working at this, she said. "It's North Americans who need to learn about being mutual."

Hein said his experience says that mutuality is a wonderful idea but is almost impossible. The grass roots love the idea of an international group, but they don't have to work at the nuts and bolts of it.

In other business the group

- heard from representatives from the Missionary Church, which is exploring joining the group;
- discussed whether or not the MC and GCMC should join the National Association of Evangelicals;
- heard a report from Larry Nickel of Mennonite Health Services;
- set their next meeting for Dec. 6-7, 1996, in Chicago;
- decided that at the next meeting they plan for a broader consultation in 1997. *Gordon Houser*

Bethel senior reduces school's water use

North Newton, Kan. (BC)—A Bethel College student is reducing the school's water use.

Aaron Chappell Deckert is working to reduce the college's dormitory water usage as a senior seminar project. Bethel's water usage has risen 20 percent in the last five years, according to Donavon Schmidt, director of the campus' physical plant. Deckert's senior seminar adviser, Julie Hart, assistant professor of sociology, suggested that Deckert study and attempt to decrease Bethel's water usage.

Deckert's goal is to get rid of the 20 percent increase. According to Deckert, at the beginning of his study in September, Bethel's daily average was significantly higher than the national daily average.

Deckert has proposed an incentive program for students, made possible by funds allotted for the project from the college. The funds equal the estimated amount the college will save on water bills. If residents reduce their water usage by a certain percent each month, they are rewarded with pizza, doughnuts and ice cream parties.

The project seems to be working. Comparing September's and October's water usage, two of the school's dormitories reduced their water use, Goering Hall by 15 percent and Haury Hall by 33 percent. Water use in Warkentin Court, the school's other student housing unit, remained stable. Deckert will observe Bethel's use of water the entire school year but will focus on the months that most students are on campus.

Deckert suggests that Bethel College residents follow simple water-saving tips such as taking shorter showers, "flipping the switch" on low-flow shower heads, turning off the faucet while brushing teeth and reporting any water leaks to maintenance.

"I've always been interested in water conservation and especially water pollution," Deckert says. "It will be interesting to see what kinds of attitudes can be changed on the Bethel campus." *Alissa Randa*

Alissa Randa

Water watch: *Bethel senior Aaron Chappell Deckert records water usage for his senior seminar.*

If the world were a village of 1,000 people, it would comprise 584 Asians, 124 Africans and 52 North Americans, among others. Thus writes Donella Meadows in *Next City* magazine. She says that 200 people in this community would receive 75 percent of the income, while another 200 would receive only 2 percent of the income. Only 70 would own automobiles. Nearly 700 would not have access to safe drinking water. (*The Marketplace*)

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Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center is offering one-day workshops on "Conflict in the Church." The workshops will be held Jan. 20, 1996, in Aurora, Ill.; Feb. 17, 1996, in Grand Rapids, Mich.; March 16, 1996, in Mountain Lake, Minn., and April 20 in St. Louis. For information contact the center at (708) 627-5310.

• • •

The total external debt burden of developing countries is now about $1.9 trillion U.S. Developing nations repaid $418 billion more than they received in loans, aid and grants between 1982 and 1990, but their debt continues to increase. African countries spend $13 billion annually in loan repayments, more than the amount they spend on all health care and primary education. (MCC U.S.)

• • •

Good Friday must become secular if it is to survive as a school holiday in Illinois. Since 1941, Good Friday has been a state holiday there. Though rescinded as a state holiday in 1989, it remained a paid one for elementary and secondary schools until a schoolteacher sued the state, arguing that as a taxpayer she shouldn't be required to fund a religious holiday. The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals decided that unlike Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter, Good Friday has no secular rituals associated with it. It noted that the schools could keep Good Friday a holiday by renaming the school holiday "spring weekend." (*Liberty*)

Record

Promise Keepers, the Christian men's organization, is beginning to develop programming in Australia. In 1995 over 700,000 men attended Promise Keepers conferences throughout the United States. (*Mennonite Brethren Herald*)

• • •

The Japan Anabaptist Center in Tokyo held a seminar on conflict transformation Oct. 31. "In light of the avoidance of conflict in Japanese culture, I was pleased with the freedom with which participants shared in the seminar," says Dale Schumm, Asia director for Mennonite Board of Missions. "People in Japan are experiencing more violence in their society. ... Christians have a special interest in learning how to deal constructively with violence." Participants included Mennonites, Quakers and people from the Church of God and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The center hopes to hold an in-depth conflict transformation event for church leaders in 1997. During 1996 several Christian Japanese graduate students will be taking mediation training in the United States.

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Mennonite Central Committee and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission sponsored a peace festival held in Francistown, Botswana. The festival marked the 10th anniversary of the formation of an interchurch group made up of youth from various African Independent Churches. In small groups participants discussed how peace relates to practical life situations, such as seeking revenge and reconciling with a person who won't forgive. Two drama groups from Gaborone, Botswana's capital, dealt with social issues, including AIDS prevention and care of people with AIDS. Francistown was recently billed as having the world's highest percentage (one in three) of pregnant women who test HIV postive.

MINISTERS

Eleanor Beachy will be interim pastor at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., beginning Jan. 1, 1996.

Eric Buller was summer pastoral intern at First Church, Beatrice, Neb.

Steve Estes is interim pastor at Flanagan (Ill.) Church. He is also chaplain at Meadows Mennonite Home in Chenoa, Ill.

John L. Freed will be minister of congregational care at First Church, Berne, Ind., beginning Jan. 1, 1996.

Iris Hartshorn has begun as co-pastor at Houston Church, joining her husband, Leo.

Anita Jantz was commissioned at Nutana Park Church, Saskatoon, in October as women's concerns minister.

Dan and **Darlene Joiner** are pastors at Immanuel Church, Delft, Minn.

Christine Juhnke has resigned as pastor at Salina (Kan.) Church, effective March 31, 1996.

Weldon Martens was installed as pastor at Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., Sept. 10.

Steve Slagel was ordained Sept. 17 as associate pastor at Silverwood Church, Goshen, Ind.

Muriel Thiessen Stackley will begin as pastor at Bergthal Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan., Feb. 1, 1996.

MCC—Mennonite Central Committee

WORKERS

Lori Tiessen Banman, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, and Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, began a one- to two-year MCC term in August in Winnipeg as an administrative assistant with Mediation Services.

Monica Buller, First Church, Winnipeg, began a one-year MCC term in July in Winnipeg as a secretary/receptionist at Pregnancy Distress Service Inc.

Premnath S. Dick, Community Church, Lancaster, Pa., began a three-year MCC term in October in Akron, Pa., as an assistant director in personnel services.

Wendy Dyck, Port Hardy (B.C.) Fellowship, began a two-year MCC term in August in Port Hardy, working as an educator.

Laura C. Funk, Jubilee Church, Winnipeg, began a one-year MCC term in September in Winnipeg as a relief receptionist and mail clerk.

Allen and **Elsiana Harder**, West Abbotsford (B.C.) Church, began five-year MCC terms in October in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Allen works as country representative.

Regina and **Ronald Henry**, Hope Church, Wichita, Kan., will serve a seven-month Eastern Mennonite Missions term in Reading, Pa., in youth ministry.

Becky Hofkamp, First Church, Denver, is beginning a two-year MCC term in North Newton, Kan., as an educator and program coordinator with the MCC Central States office.

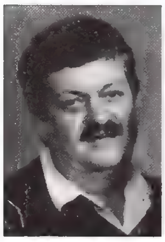
Scott Knarr, Erb Street

Banman

M. Buller

Dyck

Funk


A. Harder

E. Harder

Regina Henry

Ron Henry

Knarr

Siemens

Church, Waterloo, Ont., began a two-year joint MCC and Maison de l'amitie term in October in Montreal, as coordinator of Learning Through Service.

Ken Krahn, North Kildonan Church, Winnipeg, has begun a 10-month Service Adventure with Mennonite Board of Missions as an after-school program assistant in Norristown, Pa.

Laura Nafziger, Maple View Church, Wellesley, Ont., began a one-year MCC term in Milverton, Ont., as a thrift shop co-manager.

Marianne Linette Siemens, Fiske (Sask.) Church and Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, began a one-year MCC term in July in Winnipeg as an accounting secretary with Financial Services at MCC Canada.

Lynn Stoltzfus, Trinity Church, Glendale, Ariz., is beginning a two-year MCC term in Glendale as an MCC service coordinator.

Food services director at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School. Position includes noon cafeteria and evening banquets.

Send letter of interest and resume to **Ken Herr, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.**

The **Intermenno Trainee Program** is a one-year exchange program. Young people, between approximately 19 and 27 years old, spend a year in Europe, work and live with European Mennonites and thereby learn to known Europeans, their culture, their language, firsthand.

Applications should be submitted before **Jan. 15, 1996**, for the program year beginning August 1996.

For information contact **Mennonite Central Committee Akron, (717) 859-1151** or **MCC Winnipeg, (204) 261-6381.**

Full-time faculty/coach in physical education and athletics. Ph.D. preferred, master's degree required. Must be committed to an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith understanding. Head coaching in the women's volleyball and women's softball programs and teaching in general undergraduate physical education curriculum, the physical education major and/or the camping, recreation and outdoor ministries major. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send letter of application and resume **by Feb. 15, 1996**, to **Dr. Lee Snyder, Vice President and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**. EMU reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstances may warrant.

Single urgently needed for one-year VS position as **assistant host or hostess** at the **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference. Duties include day-to-day operation of bed and breakfast-type guest house and providing a "home away from home" for international travelers.

For information contact Annabelle Kratz, **13495 Brighton Dam Road, Clarksville, MD 21029; (301) 596-9057.**

Bethel College wishes to fill a position in **Bible and religion** beginning August 1996. This will be a four-year appointment to replace a faculty member on extended leave. Ph.D. or significant scholarly work beyond the M.Div. required, with emphasis in biblical studies preferred. Commitments to undergraduate teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration, and Bethel's mission as a church-related college are essential. Qualifications and experience will be considered for both salary and rank.

Applications for this position should include resume, three letters of reference and recent graduate school transcript if applicable. Consideration of applications will begin in January and continue until the position is filled. Bethel is an equal opportunity employer and especially encourages women and minorities to apply.

Materials should be sent to **Wynn M. Goering, Academic Dean, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th St., North Newton, KS 67117.**

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Bluffton College

Bluffton College announces the following faculty vacancies for 1996-97. Those positions marked (NEW) are the result of faculty expansion because of student growth; the other positions are replacement positions. Additional information on all faculty vacancies is available at http://wwwbluffton.edu/acadaffairs/facvac.

Biology (NEW): Master's degree in biology or closely related field; Ph.D. preferred. Rank dependent on qualifications. Continuing appointment may be expected, however tenure will not be granted without a terminal degree. The position includes teaching general education biology with biology laboratory. The successful applicant will work with a team in implementing a new general education integrated science curriculum consisting of physics, astronomy, earth science, chemistry and biology. The ability to contribute in multiple disciplines of this endeavor will be an asset. Due to limited lab space and a growing evening program, this position will involve frequent evening courses and evening labs; primary responsibilities will be fulfilled in the afternoons and evenings. Screening begins Feb. 1, 1996.

Communication and speech: Master's considered, Ph.D. preferred. Rank dependent on qualifications. Evidence of effective teaching ability in various areas of speech and communication. Responsibilities include teaching some combination of the following areas: public speaking, rhetoric, group communication, mass media and broadcast journalism. Position includes advising student publications and/or broadcasting projects. Screening begins Feb. 13, 1996.

Education: ABD considered; doctorate preferred. Rank dependent on qualifications. Certification in elementary education as well as special education (K-12 LD and/or DH). The successful applicant will have a minimum of three years teaching experience at the elementary level or in K-12 special education; graduate level teaching experience preferred. Responsibilities include teaching graduate and undergraduate education courses in curriculum and instruction in special education, elementary education and graduate education. Placement and supervision of student teachers in elementary and special education. Screening begins Feb. 1, 1996.

History (NEW): ABD considered; Ph.D. preferred. Assistant/associate professor, European intellectual history, ancient or medieval. The successful candidate will demonstrate proficiency in at least one field of non-Western history and evidence serious scholarship in philosophy and/or political science. Responsibilities include teaching several sections a year in the new general education humanities course as well as existing courses in history, philosophy and political science. Screening begins Feb. 1, 1996.

Mathematics (NEW): Ph.D. in mathematics or mathematics education. Rank dependent on qualifications. Competency to teach most areas of mathematics and expertise in related disciplines will be viewed favorably. Willingness to teach a broad range of mathematics courses; proficiency in using graphics calculators and computer software is expected. Screening begins Feb. 1, 1996.

Physics (NEW): Master's degree in physics or closely related field such as chemical physics or astronomy; Ph.D. preferred. Rank dependent on qualifications. Continuing appointment may be expected; however, tenure will not be granted without a terminal degree. The position includes teaching general education physics with physics laboratory. The successful applicant will work with a team in implementing a new general education integrated science curriculum consisting of physics, astronomy, earth science, chemistry and biology. The ability to contribute in multiple disciplines of this endeavor will be an asset. Due to limited lab space and a growing evening program, this position will involve frequent evening courses and evening labs; primary responsibilities will be fulfilled in the afternoons and evenings. Screening begins Jan. 15, 1996.

Religion (NEW): ABD considered; Ph.D. preferred. Rank dependent on qualifications. Prefer specialization/dissertation area in Old Testament or ethics, ability to teach philosophy a plus. Applicants should have an openness to and respect for the Anabaptist-Mennonite, peace church tradition of Bluffton College. Responsibilities include teaching 36 quarter hours per year in Introduction to Biblical Literature and courses in church history, theology and/or ethics, philosophy if possible. Screening begins Jan. 15, 1996.

Sociology (NEW): Ph.D. sociology generalist to teach in several areas of sociology. Rank dependent on qualifications. Evidence of teaching excellence is essential. Interdisciplinary teaching competence will be viewed favorably. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate introductory and advanced courses in sociology and integrated social science in the general education core curriculum as well as, possibly, courses in the criminal justice program. Screening begins Jan. 31, 1996.

Health, physical education and recreation; softball coach (NEW): Master's degree required. Rank dependent on qualifications. Physical education and recreation generalist with ability to teach in several areas of the field. Preference for collegiate experience in coaching softball as well as basketball or volleyball. Responsibilities include teaching several, but not all, of the following courses: Fit for Life, Recreation Administration, Sport and Society, Recreation and the Aging Process, Facilities Planning and Construction, Team and Individual Sports and Recreation Arts and Crafts. Coaching duties include responsibility for the organization and administration of all phases of an NCAA Division III softball program while also serving as an assistant coach in either volleyball or basketball. Screening begins Jan. 15, 1996.

English (NEW): ABD considered; Ph.D. preferred. Nontenure track position, rank dependent on qualifications. Evidence or promise of teaching excellence is essential. The successful candidate will teach courses in writing and literature (world literature and humanities desirable). Screening begins Feb. 1, 1996.

All positions are full-time, tenure track (unless otherwise noted), beginning in the 1996 fall quarter. Screening of applications will begin on the dates noted above and continue until an appointment is made.

Send letter of interest and resume or vita to: Amy Tabler, Assistant to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 West College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196; e-mail: tablera@bluffton.edu. *equal opportunity employer*

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One night a heavily pregnant Mrs. Apolon asked MCC nurse Margaret De Jong to drive her over Haiti's rough, hilly roads to the hospital. On the way Mrs. Apolon's labor become so intense Margaret pulled over, grabbing gloves just in time to catch the baby. To everyone's amazement another head soon emerged.

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134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9
(204) 261-6381

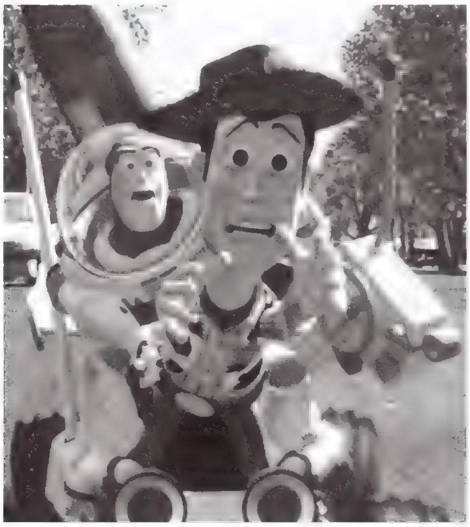
FILMS

COMPUTER COMEDIANS

Toy Story, *produced by Ralph Guggenheim and Bonnie Arnold, directed by John Lasseter*

Reviewed by Larry Penner, assistant editor

Anyone who has seen previews for *Toy Story* knows about the computer effects. And *Toy Story* is a special effects movie. The film took four years to complete. Each second of the 77-minute movie requires about 120 megabytes of computer memory.



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Buzz and Woody: *Coming at you this holiday season*

But in the theater, the film quickly settles into a story. Computer stunts become a complement to the story as viewers are caught up in the emotional life of toys. Woody, a cowboy with a pullstring, rules Andy's toy roost until a birthday party brings in Buzz Lightyear, a supertoy with a laser arm and pop-out wings. The story unfolds into a tale about relationships and getting along that carries simple but good morals for children and their parents.

Toy Story's cast includes stars of many Americans' childhoods. Mr. Potato Head, a quick-draw Etch-a-Sketch, Slinky Dog, a Barrel of Monkeys and Bucket of Soldiers all live in the toy society that comes to life when its master Andy leaves the room.

Favorite American comic actors lend personality to the toy characters. America is programmed to laugh at the sound of these voices (*Home Improvement*'s Tim Allen as Buzz Lightyear and Tom Hanks as Woody, *Cheers*' mail carrier John Ratzenberger as the piggy bank and Don Rickles as Mr. Potato Head).

Toy Story is an enjoyable (if not profound) diversion for the holidays. Very young children may be frightened by scenes of a mean neighbor boy who derives sadistic joy from destroying toys. But apart from those scenes, the film should prove inoffensive.

The offense may come when viewers step out of the theater, into the shopping mall. Disney has proved again (as in *Aladdin, Pocahontas, The Lion King*) its mastery of marketing. *Toy Story* characters appear on fast-food boxes and potato chip bags. Buzz Lightyear dolls stand at the ready on Toys "R" Us shelves.

But inside the theater, marketing blitz aside, *Toy Story* becomes a fun-to-watch tale of childhood imagination.

BOOKS

THIRD-WORLD WOMEN SPEAK

Feminist Theology From the Third World: A Reader, *edited by Ursula King (Orbis Books, 1994, 434 pages)*

Reviewed by Wilma Ann Bailey, Messiah College

This provocative book, a companion volume to the earlier *Feminist Theology* edited by Ann Loades, probably provides the most eclectic collection of source material on Christian feminist theology from the Third World that is available at this point in time. The women who are given voice in this text speak out of African/African-American, Asian/Asian-American, Latin American, Pacific Islander and Native American contexts. Some are women with specialized education in theology, others learned their theology from life experience.

This book is divided into five parts: "Doing Theology from Third World Women's Perspective," "Women's Oppression and Cries of Pain," "The Bible as a Source of Empowerment for Women," "Challenging Traditional Theological Thinking," and "A Newly Emerging Spirituality." There are sermons, essays, addresses and conference statements.

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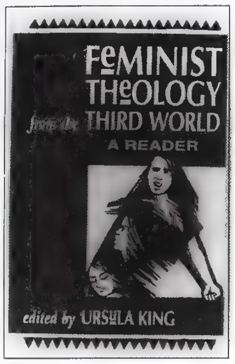


What do Third-World women have to say about theology and the theological enterprise? A sample follows: Elsa Tamez (Mexico) writes that it is necessary to read the Bible not only from the perspective of women, as feminist theology proposes, but from the perspective of the poor. Jean Zaru (Palestine) calls women to leave passivity behind and engage in nonviolent action, even though the line between violence and nonviolence is not always clear. Marianne Katoppo (Indonesia) challenges the notion of an all-male Trinity, noting that in Hebrew the word for spirit is feminine. Mercy Amber Oduyoye (Ghana) writes of the potency of the spirituality of African women in evidence particularly in their prayers and singing.

This anthology is not always easy to read. Most of the essays were written for other contexts, and the reader, not having the references to which the writer is responding, has the feeling that something is missing, namely the original context, whether it be a particular society, conference or historical moment. It is perhaps significant that the editor, a "white woman living in the First World," selected the material based upon her own personal preference. Although the writings and excerpts are those of Third World women, the book clearly reflects the editor's perspective and worldview.

PHILIPPIAN COMMENTARY

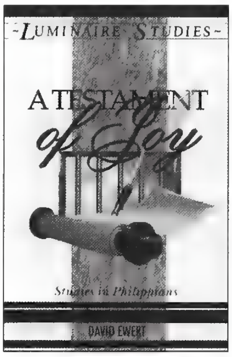
A Testament of Joy *by David Ewert (Kindred Press, 1995, 153 pages)*

Reviewed by Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho

If you want a brief but not spotty commentary on Philippians, this is the book for you. It is subtitled "Studies in Philippians," but it actually offers a clear, brief and useful commentary on every verse of Paul's letter, with an occasional comment on historical background or Greek vocabulary. These comments shed light on the text without clogging the main train of thought.

David Ewert is a retired New Testament scholar who has taught at Eastern Mennonite College, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Brethren Bible College. He has an eye for the practical application and never forgets that his text was written by a real human being in difficult circumstances. His comment on verse 19 of chapter one: "Paul believed firmly in the efficacy of prayer to change circumstances, and thereby he encourages us to pray about our daily tasks and troubles."

With regard to Paul's exhortation to "be of the same mind" (2:2) Ewert comments, "when there is a harmony of attitudes, differences of opinion do not easily drive people apart." When Paul expresses concern about Epaphroditus, calling him "fellow-soldier," Ewert writes, "Although the apostle was a pioneer in many respects, he did not think of himself as a lone ranger."



Helpful questions at different points in the book make it useful as a study guide, while the use of the New Revised Standard Version provides a clear and reliable translation. If the other titles in the "Luminaire Series" put out by Kindred Press match this quality, the series is worthy of wide use in our churches.

Resources

- **As I Am** is the newest recording by Chuck Neufeld (with Jon Neufeld and the Reunion Vocal Band). Order from MVS Recordings (checks payable to Chuck Neufeld), P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; (316) 283-5100; CD $15 U.S., cassette $10 U.S.
- **Sarah's Prairie** by Delbert F. Plett (Windflower Communications, 1995, $13.99 U.S./$19.99 Cdn.) is a coming-of-age story of three generations in a fictional Mennonite community.
- **Rosanna of the Amish** by Joseph W. Yoder (Herald Press, 1995, $9.95 U.S./ $14.20 Cdn.) is the centennial edition of this biography of Rosanna, an Irish orphan raised by an unmarried Amish woman in the 1800s.
- **A Community of Memory: My Days with George and Clara** by Jeff Gundy (University of Illinois Press) traces seven generations of the author's Mennonite and Amish family. Available for $14.95 U.S. from the Blufton College Bookstore, Bluffton, OH 45817; or from University of Illinois Press, 1-800-545-4703.
- **Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road**, edited by Dudley Woodberry (MARC Publications, 1995, $15.95 U.S.), uses the encounter with Jesus on the Emmaus Road to reflect on issues in witnessing to Muslims today.
- **Ishmael My Brother: A Christian Introduction to Islam**, compiled by Anne Cooper (MARC Publications, 1995, $12.95 U.S.), is a revised edition that includes a chapter on Islamic fundamentalism.
- **From Grim to Green Pastures: Meditations for the Sick and Their Caregivers** by Richard L. Morgan (Upper Room, 1994, $8.95 U.S.) proposes that sickness is a time for spiritual discovery and learning.
- **Bioethics and the Future of Medicine: A Christian Appraisal**, edited by John F. Kilner, Nigel M. de S. Cameron and David L. Schiedermayer (Eerdmans, 1995, $18.99 U.S.), discusses today's medical dilemmas: the ethics and practice of medicine, the abortion crisis and the expanding issues of bioethics.
- **Caregiver's Gethsemane: When a Loved One Longs to Die** by Cecile Bauer (Paulist Press, 1995, $8.95 U.S.) is a guide for people caring for a terminally ill loved one.
- **Active Spirituality: A Guide for Seekers and Ministers** by Kent Ira Groff (Alban Institute, 1995, $19.70 U.S. postpaid) explores five spiritual disciplines (community, solitude, learning, service and vocation), using prayer exercises.
- **Spiritual Awakening: A Guide to Spiritual Life in Congregations** by John Ackerman (Alban Institute, 1995, $17.85 U.S. postpaid) shows how to develop the corporate spirituality of congregations based on family-systems theory.

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Editorial

Structures that help us grow

Like them or not, we live with church structures. Our church life is organized in various ways to help it operate more efficiently and more faithfully. At least, that is what we hope.

Last August, delegates for the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) voted to move toward integration of the two denominations. The GC and MC general boards later appointed an Integration Committee (IC) to "guide and monitor the integration process" (see the story on page 13).

Members of this committee expressed some trepidation at their responsibility, but they later realized, as GC moderator Darrell Fast said, that "people are waiting for this group to do something. We need to make our presence felt."

But how bold can they be? A tension that will be with us throughout this process is this: How much do we hold on to our old structures, and how freely do we create new structures?

With two groups joining, the tendency in each group is to hold on to the ways they have been operating. The temptation is to create something new by trading chips, compromising here and there to patch together a different structure that retains equal parts of the old structures.

In this issue's Speaking Out column (page 10), Dennis Koehn pleads for a different strategy. He calls us to base our changes on "clearly articulated biblical principles," and he goes on to suggest four: vision, stewardship, synergy and responsiveness.

Some IC members had similar thoughts when they said we need to call people to the "Vision: Healing and Hope" statement also passed at Wichita. Don Steelberg even suggested hiring an evangelist-leader to visit congregations and talk about the vision of integration.

Keeping that vision in mind while working on new structures will be a challenge not only to the IC but to the rest of us as well. With each discussion of integration we need to ask, How will this new arrangement help us "be followers of Jesus Christ and … grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world"?

Wonderful as that vision is, it has to be lived out through structures of some kind. We are not disembodied souls. Just as we need our bodies to live out our goals, Conference of Mennonites in Canada general secretary Helmut Harder told the IC, we also need structures to live out our church life. You can have healthy and unhealthy structures, he said, but you have to have some kind of structures.

For many people the discussion of integration does not seem relevant to them. Yet if we are all to be part of the vision to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, we will need structures that help that growth rather than hinder it.

Cherished attachments: Creating such structures will be a complex matter. We will not operate from a blank slate. Each of us carries close to our hearts traditions, ways of organizing and making decisions, that we do not want to lose. Yet if we are to be a church that brings healing and hope to the world, we will have to let go of some cherished attachments. As in any relationship, we will lose something and gain something as we join together.

As we work toward greater unity we will have to open our minds and hearts to the beliefs, the experiences, the stories of others. Let us learn from our spiritual forebears and not pursue a unity by exclusion.

The early Anabaptists were a diverse lot, despite our attempts to idealize them as a single-minded community. Even the Schleitheim Confession, often referred to as a unifier of diverse Mennonites, was not representative of all Anabaptists. C. Arnold Snyder writes in *The Life and Thought of Michael Sattler* about Schleitheim: "Certainly minor differences were worked out among Anabaptists of similar persuasion, but had Denck, Kautz and Hubmaier been present, no such unanimity would have been conceivable. The fact that unity was achieved through *exclusion* was at least as significant … as the fact that unity was achieved through consensus."

A true integration that will help us live out our vision of healing and hope will require listening to all concerned. But it will also require all of us to be willing to sacrifice things we may hold dear. *Gordon Houser*

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